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## Bangladesh Election Support Activities Final Performance Evaluation

**December 2015**

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Cover Photo: Focus group discussion on master training for election monitors (Photo Credit: Constance Kaplan)

# **BANGLADESH ELECTION SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**December 7, 2015**

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## **DISCLAIMER**

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# ACRONYMS

AL	Awami League
BDGPE	Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs' Evaluations
BESA	Bangladesh Election Support Activities
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BNPS	Bangladesh Nari Pragati Shangha
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections
Brotee	Brotee Samaj Kallyan Sanghstha
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFMN	Campaign Finance Monitoring Network
CHT	Chittagong Hills Tracts
COP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DFID	Department for International Development
DRG	Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance
DI	Democracy International
DO	Development Objective
DPR	Democratic Participation and Reform
ECB	Election Commission of Bangladesh
EDR	Election Dispute Resolution
EMO	Election Monitoring Organization
EQUI™	Evaluation Quality, Use, and Impact
ETI	Electoral Training Institute
EVER	Electoral Violence Education and Resolution
EWG	Election Working Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Fiscal Year
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GPG	Group on Political Governance
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IID	Institute of Informatics and Development
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
IRI	International Republican Institute
IU-DSSH	Independent University's Department of Social Science and Humanities
JANIPOP	Jatyia Nirbachon Porjobekkhon Parishad
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MP	Member of Parliament
MRDI	Management and Resources Development Initiative
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAVE	People Against Violence in Elections
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PRIP	Private Rural Initiatives Program

PRODIP	Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices
RFA	Request for Applications
RFP	Request for Proposal
RTA	Research Training Academy
SEMB	Strengthening Election Management in Bangladesh
SDLG	Strengthening Democratic Local Governance
SOW	Scope of Work
TAF	The Asia Foundation
THP	The Hunger Project
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
TMSS	Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USN	United States National
WAVE	Women Against Violence in Elections

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through its Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs' Evaluations program, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh contracted Social Impact, Inc. (SI) to undertake a final performance evaluation of the Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA) program, implemented by the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). The CEPPS implementing partners (IPs) are the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

The BESA project aimed to strengthen the integrity of election processes in Bangladesh by comprehensively engaging stakeholders on matters of campaign finance, mitigation of election-related violence, and ensuring meaningful monitoring of the electoral environment before, during, and after elections. The performance period was late 2012 through 2015, with an estimated ceiling amount of 8 million United States dollars (USD).<sup>1</sup> The effective date of the agreement was January 16, 2013, with an estimated completion date of January 15, 2016. However, in December 2014, CEPPS was advised that the funding amount was reduced to 6.1 million USD, prompting one partner group, NDI, to end their program on October 31, 2015.

## PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this final performance evaluation is to assess BESA's technical and programmatic validity, the implementers' performance in achieving the project objectives, and the relevance of program activities. The audience is USAID/Bangladesh, the CEPPS partners (IFES, IRI, and NDI), the United States Embassy and State Department in Bangladesh, the USAID Asia Bureau, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors working for democratic governance in Bangladesh, and other development partners. The evaluation team, hereinafter referred to as "the team," hopes that the report will be used to inform the design of future USAID democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) programs in Bangladesh in support of free, fair, and credible elections.

The evaluation methodology included a review of USAID and BESA contract documents; particularly CEPPS' quarterly reports, attachments, and deliverables; election-related articles covering Bangladesh elections since 1991; and websites containing Bangladesh election information. Deficiencies in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reporting and quarterly reports made the evaluation challenging. Each BESA partner had a different format, and the formats varied over time. The M&E data sources (performance management plan reports, F indicator reports, and quarterly reports) were not consistent on specifying the project's quantitative outputs.

The evaluation methodology comprised consultations with partners and beneficiaries, a review of local and global contextual information, and discussions with national and international electoral stakeholders also working in the DRG field in Bangladesh. The team conducted 48 key informant interviews and four focus group discussions with 22 participants. The team sought to interview members of the Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB) and its secretariat, but attempts through various channels failed and ultimately the team was unable to speak with any commissioners or staff of the ECB. This lack of interest by the ECB was noted throughout the BESA activities reports.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

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<sup>1</sup> BESA RFA-388-12-000008, p. 2

**Overall Question: Effectiveness: To what extent has the BESA program been effective in achieving its planned objectives? What added value has USAID brought to the electoral environment in Bangladesh through BESA? Were there any unexpected outcomes?**

Throughout the program, BESA confronted various implementation challenges. Ongoing political violence slowed startup and impeded program implementation in Year 1, which saw the cancellation of the observation activities for the January 2014 Parliamentary elections. In Year 2, the violence subsided, then in 2015, there was a road blockade by the opposition, albeit with less impact on programming. Throughout Years 1 and 2, another major problem was the lack of engagement on the part of the ECB, which was apparent in 2013 but became acute in early 2014. In addition, in Year 2 there was a reduction in project funding, which led to some cutbacks in activities; additional funding was obtained from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) for activities in Year 3.

BESAS's Year 1 produced a series of assessments and reports submitted to ECB, which were largely ignored, with the argument that the ECB had to focus on the Parliamentary elections. When these elections were over, the ECB said that it had to focus on the upazila elections, thus continuing to elude substantive engagement. Beyond meetings, little was accomplished with the ECB in Years 1 and 2. The Year 1 elections observation and campaign monitoring activities were limited to a group of five civil society organizations (CSOs) who worked simultaneously with NDI and IRI, reducing the reach of the project. Four of these five CSOs did not have significant experience in elections. Inexplicably BESA did not seek to work through the most important non-governmental actor in elections observation and monitoring, the Elections Working Group (EWG), which had been active since 2006, with 29 member CSOs.

In Year 2, after cancelling the planned observation of the 2014 Parliamentary elections, BESA supported small scale observation and monitoring of the upazila elections. While BESA emphasized quality of training over quantity, both NDI and IRI had many difficulties with their relatively inexperienced CSO partners. The observation and monitoring reports were not considered to be of sufficient quality to be widely disseminated. NDI did not meet its target for "cascade training" of election observers through BESA's partner CSOs. IRI encountered difficulties in supporting campaign finance monitoring, and this activity was ended in Year 2. IFES was able to initiate some innovative activities in Year 2 with CSO partners: the campaign disclosure database with SHUJAN and the People against Elections Violence (PAVE) pilot activities to promote community volunteers' efforts to prevent elections violence.

During Years 1 and 2, BESA did not adapt rapidly to the collapse of the project's critical assumptions about ECB's disinterest in engaging on capacity development or policy reform. ECB engagement underpinned most of BESAS's objectives. The need for a redesign of BESA program activities was recognized explicitly by BESA and USAID in late 2013, but it did not occur until the approval of the Year 3 Work Plan in February 2015, over a year later. In this plan, CEPPS stated it had developed a broad, integrated approach to advocacy on elections reform with CSO partners. The original thematic areas of BESA activities (elections finance, elections monitoring, election violence, and elections research) did not suffer modifications, rather they were reframed as part of the advocacy strategy. Also, on the basis of positive assessments, the pilot PAVE component was scaled up considerably, with DFID support.

**Overall Question Relevance: To what extent are the project's objectives and activities undertaken still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh (response should reflect program restructuring that took place post 2014 elections)?**

The Year 3 Work Plan advocacy strategy with CSOs was anchored in part on new project advisory groups, created to replace the technical groups established in Years 1 and 2, which had failed to garner ECB support. NDI created a "next generation leaders" group, which assisted in planning advocacy activities, most prominently a series of Policy Breakfasts with elite decision-makers and opinion leaders. It is not clear to the team whether the BESA policy agenda respond to demand from civil society, as IRI's

own polling shows that less than one percent of respondents see electoral reform as a priority issue. In BESAS' own Policy Breakfasts, the majority of participants did not see it as a major issue. IRI's own evaluations of the campaign finance monitoring also points to the public's lack of interest.

The Year 3 CSO partnerships were: the five CSOs that had worked on elections observation and campaign finance monitoring; six new CSO partners linked to IFES' CSO campaign finance and election security work and NDI's partner, the Institute of Informatics and Development, responsible for the "EK Bangladesh" concept, anchored on a dedicated internet portal dedicated to engaging youth in policy debate on elections issues and democracy and governance more broadly. The small group of "next generation leaders" was able to convene another 120 opinion leaders to participate in a Policy Breakfast series. IRI's role in Year 3 was to provide research reports and survey presentations that were uploaded onto the web portal.

Alongside this advocacy work with Dhaka-based elite organizations and leaders was another innovative activity—the signing of a sub award with The Hunger Project (THP) to support the scaling up of the PAVE component aimed at preventing election violence through the support of community-based volunteers. While the team did not find that the PAVE component's M&E approach provided sufficient justification for scaling up the pilot activities, it was intuitively appealing. The team stresses the need for further, more robust M&E as it progresses. Also, it asks why the PAVE component has not been integrated into the "Ek Bangladesh" strategy, linking community leaders to the advocacy effort.

Overall, given the incipient nature of the Year 3 activities, it is not possible to form a judgement as to their impact (again, extensive to PAVE). The team concludes that the strategy, while representing a proactive and positive effort by BESA partners to recast their approach, does not promise to be successful as it is designed, owing to the extremely limited reach of the activities; the few CSO partners involved; the lack of budget resources for any significant outreach and communications; a poorly executed internet portal; and a low level of understanding and ownership of the activities on the part of the CSO partners and leaders. It does not correspond to the Year 3 Work Plan's ambitious concept of a civil society "platform" for advocacy and is too weak to be relevant. It needs to have a broader reach in organized civil society, more resources, and better messaging and communications.

**Overall Question: Efficiency: Has CEPPS been an effective and efficient mechanism for addressing the BESA project objectives? What have been the main advantages and challenges in the management of the project through CEPPS? Have the consortium members coordinated adequately in function of project objectives?**

The CEPPS implementation of BESA brought international expertise, experience, and international best practices from each IP to address the program objectives. Each IP mobilized its experts to provide inputs into program activities. The decision to maintain three offices and three resident expat Chief of Parties (COPs), instead of one office and an expat COP/Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) team, cost the program an additional 2.3 million USD, equivalent to more than 25 percent of the original budget.

Comparisons with other USAID/Bangladesh DRG programs with similar or larger budgets and operations suggest that BESA's management structure was excessively costly and not justified. A review of the main program activities shows that the individual IPs never had a high level of program activities. In some quarters, the activity level was very low. The decision to fund country offices for all three of the CEPPS partners and the resulting high operating costs also worked to reduce the budget resources available for BESA's program activities in Years 1 and 2, which were thus limited to quite small-scale initiatives, even in election observation. As mentioned above, the problem of scale carried through to the advocacy strategies in Year 3. The team provides examples of how a smaller office setup would have allowed for a much larger scale of activities in areas like training or elections observation.

**Component Questions:**

**Component 1: In the current political context, is promoting electoral reform in campaign finance (and in other electoral reform topics) still relevant and feasible? In light of the challenges in working with the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and ECB in particular, what other approaches should USAID consider in follow-on projects?**

While the Year 3 Work Plan was based on a new set of “critical assumptions,” the BESA documents do not discuss public opinion about elections reform, or campaign finance reform more specifically. Who supports electoral reform? Is it high on the public’s list of policy priorities? IRI’s own surveys say not. Clearly, any advocacy effort will have a significant challenge in generating public awareness and interest in the topic.

Beyond this general concern, the team identifies three areas of concern. First, BESA has interacted with a very small number of CSOs. Contrary to USAID guidance on the use of local systems for impact and sustainability, BESA has not involved the EWG, which has been leading advocacy activities in this area. Second, the campaign finance observation carried out by IRI’s partner election monitoring organizations appears to have been unsuccessful, ending in Year 2 without any significant follow-on activity. IRI’s own reports show that the partner CSOs found it difficult to use the methodology and the results were not disseminated among other CSOs. Thus, BESA has not yet found an effective approach to involving CSOs in campaign finance monitoring. Third, BESA missed an opportunity to use the IRI sub-grants activity to support research to deepen knowledge about this policy issue through rigorous studies.

BESA’s argument that given the unwillingness of the GOB, ECB, or political parties to support campaign finance reform, the “only alternative” is work with CSOs. This may be true, but it does not mean that it will be successful. The team notes that USAID/Bangladesh and other donors supported advocacy efforts in other areas of DRG since 2009, which have run aground on GOB indifference to the efforts of civil society groups. It is not clear how a small-scale campaign based on deliberations among informal working groups, with no resources for dissemination, and without a broad-base of support in civil society, would be successful in changing the position of the GOB, ECB, and the political parties.

**Component 2: How effective was BESA in strengthening domestic elections monitoring through partnerships with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs)? What alternative strategy could be taken for follow-on projects in strengthening domestic election monitoring? How effective was BESA in strengthening local NGOs and media in conducting research? (IRI)**

It is not clear to the team what the “impact model” was behind the election observation. NDI claimed that it was promoting quality, i.e., use of international standards and best practices, rather than quantity. Effectively, BESA’s training reached few Master Trainers, and did not meet its targets for fielding observers. Thus, the question is what will it have achieved beyond the group of five partner CSOs? According to NDI’s reports, the CSOs did not attain the proposed standards. After the upazila elections, there was no follow on, for example, to take the lessons learned from the experience, modify the training, and offer it to a larger group of CSOs. The learning stopped. In this regard, the failure to continue to involve more CSOs, and especially those in the EWG, has meant that BESA’s election monitoring activities have very limited reach. This should be corrected in any follow-on activity.

The research papers supported by IRI were to be released in October 2014, but were just released as policy briefs on the ‘Ek Bangladesh’ website over a year later, in September 2015, a few months before close-out. The team concludes that the problems and delays reflect the deficient sub-grantee selection process, which did not focus on experienced research organizations, or consider sustainability. Looking at the grantees’ institutional profiles, there is little to no experience or capacity in conducting research. The team concludes that IRI has not been successful in this activity, owing to the CSOs’ lack of institutional vocation or dedicated research staff to conduct social research.

This component of BESA makes little sense from the point of view of institutional and human capacity development approaches. In Bangladesh, there are numerous university faculties and independent think tanks which have a clear vocation and expertise in the field of DRG and related topics. Any support for research around elections should prioritize building their capacity, supporting professional researchers, university professors, and graduate students to use public opinion survey data and apply it to analysis of elections issues. This is something that the four research projects supported by IRI failed to do. The research projects supported by BESA do not use the survey data from the four surveys produced by IRI; nor did IRI provide them with additional focused survey research. The team concludes that IRI's activities in funding research have so far contributed very little in providing information that might inform activities within the advocacy agenda of the project.

**Component 3: How effective was BESA in addressing election violence and security issues? What challenges did BESA face in this component and how did the project respond? What other approaches BESA/USAID can think of while engaging with GOB on sensitive issues such as election violence and security? How successful was the partnership between People Against Violence in Elections (PAVE) and the Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) project fellowship program in addressing election violence?**

Although the ECB was hesitant to address election violence and security issues, a security assessment was conducted. In addition, security trainings and workshops were held in Year 1. However, the ECB did not engage in any meaningful way in electoral security recommendations made by BESA. BESA planned to partner with Odhikar, a CSO with prior experience (from 2008) in monitoring electoral violence. However, as mentioned above, Odhikar was not approved by the NGO Bureau of Affairs and could not work with BESA. Eventually, IFES refocused program interventions towards civil society through the development of PAVE, an innovative community level program developed to address peace and conflict issues through volunteer “peace ambassadors.” IFES took an inductive and gradual approach, developing the PAVE concept and piloting it on a small scale. The PAVE trainings commenced in July 2013 through the DPR fellows program and continued sporadically through Year 2. In Year 3, BESA subcontracted with THP to work with their network to scale up the PAVE component, incorporating it into other THP interventions at the community level and training 560 participants in four regions.

IFES' approach was based on learning from pilot activities before scaling up. The work with the Democracy International (DI) Fellows was useful, but the team notes that the DI cohort has higher education and status levels than THP's volunteers. While IFES' novel approach to conflict prevention may be viable, it is premature to conclude whether it will be a success. While it is intuitively appealing, the team did not see evidence of a rigorous M&E activity that might provide data on its effectiveness. The M&E is based on participants' self-assessment, which has major risk of response bias. BESA has not developed a robust quantitative M&E approach. IFES might consider instead a robust qualitative approach, using ethnographic methods to document program impacts on the dynamics of political violence in selected locales.

PAVE could be a good fit with the EK Bangladesh strategy, in that it offers a potential base for community outreach and involvement in advocacy, to complement activities with CSOs and the other “elite” policy debates in the BESA advisory groups and the Policy Breakfasts. There is no evidence that BESA has been attempting to build this link. This is a major weakness of PAVE and other Year 3 activities, i.e., the lack of coordination among the BESA partners to create a unified, coherent advocacy and outreach effort, with common messaging, communications channels and coordinated activities. Without that, the overall approach in Year 3 does not appear to be more than the sum of its parts.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- I. USAID should assess whether it is practical to fund newly designed programs with a shift towards civil society advocacy and community based activism to promote electoral reforms. In the medium

term, while the ECB is likely not to be more receptive than it has in the last three years, it is not clear that there is an opportunity for successful work in this area. One critical assumption is that the GOB and the ECB will respond positively to advocacy efforts or community mobilization coming from CSOs at a time when the GOB is actively trying to close spaces for CSO involvement in policy.

2. If USAID were to support a shift to a “demand side” approach to electoral reform, it should require the selected IPs to develop comprehensive, evidence-based advocacy and communications strategies. These strategies should be based on broad coalitions of CSOs and civil society leaders, with ownership and understanding of the objectives and strategies, rather than informal working groups with two or three CSOs convened from time to time by the IPs. They should be informed by polling and relevant research that contributes directly to the strategy design, messaging, communications, and media strategies and supported with adequate budget resources.
3. A decision to fund a new program with a consortium (whether CEPPS or other IPs) should consider an operational structure with a single office and one expat COP (and DCOP if appropriate). At the level of funding envisioned within the USAID/Bangladesh DRG portfolio, this will provide adequate management. Any consortium of IPs should be required to provide innovative and cost-effective program approaches and implementation strategies, using their international experts for short term technical assistance rather than as resident directors (COPs) and relying on local partners. Close attention should be paid to ensuring adequate budget resources for larger scale program activities, whether training, outreach, communications, or community activism.
4. Related to the previous recommendation, in looking at options, USAID should consider focusing any work on campaign finance to give priority of place to engagement with the political parties. Without bringing in political party leaders, it is hard to imagine success in advocacy efforts. This could be done by incorporating campaign finance into any program with political parties after the completion of the DPR project. While it seems doubtful in the current political context that the Awami League would participate sincerely in such an effort, the opposition parties may find this topic more appealing.
5. A more efficient office configuration and reduced operating costs would free up budget resources for training, technical assistance, and subcontracting. If a newly designed program were to focus on civil society advocacy and community activism, a large budget share should go to support the work of local IPs, through contracts and sub-grants. This should be accompanied by efforts to ensure stakeholder buy-in and leadership. USAID should look at other civil society advocacy “platforms” in Bangladesh to identify lessons and recommendations for designing a broad-based initiative.
6. The strategy developed by THP to support community-based PAVE activities should be carefully evaluated before any decision to fund a large scale program of this sort. Attention should be placed on issues such as the selection of community activists, their standing in the community, and their ability to convene other institutional actors (in particular, senior leaders of political parties). M&E approaches should be improved to measure how the program contributes to changing dynamics of political violence locally. It should be incorporated within the messaging and communications strategies of the broader program, not as a “community” activity isolated from the advocacy.
7. If USAID considers more activities in support of election observation, they should allocate more resources to the EWG—whether within the framework of a new electoral reform project or directly through a small “USAID Forward” mechanism to support CSO activities within the EWG. Working within the EWG framework would be a cost-effective way of reaching a large scale quickly and would allow USAID to stay engaged in election reform issues before the next election through the EWG.
8. If USAID is committed to building capacity for producing robust electoral research using quantitative

methods, it should consider partnerships with local think tanks or university social science faculties to promote research programs. This could be done within the framework of the Asia Barometer (similar to USAID support to the Latin American Public Opinion Project initiative) to continue frequent surveying to produce relevant studies around elections, but also using survey instruments designed in function of research into broader determinants of political behavior, voting, abstention, protest, etc.

## LESSONS LEARNED

1. Electoral support programs are subject to changing political environments and vulnerable to broad political dynamics, consensus on application of constitutional and legal provisions, patterns of political competition, inter-party violence, autonomy of elections commissions, and other external factors. USAID should make realistic assessments of the autonomy and commitment to engage on the part of elections commissions and be prepared to make decisions about program focus, budgets, etc., reducing or ending program support when appropriate.
2. While elections support projects are one way of ensuring engagement with government counterparts, this is not a compelling argument to maintain a failing program. In cases like BESA, in which the critical assumptions of the project have collapsed entirely, USAID and United States government should explore other options for engagement, which will provide more value for money. Multi-year, large scale projects might generate operational costs far beyond the possible utility of occasional encounters with a recalcitrant government counterpart. In such cases, the Mission should consider other strategies for engagement that do not require project funding.
3. A failure on the part of government agencies to engage on electoral reform is not *prima facie* evidence that a turn to civil society advocacy strategies will be a more effective way of promoting reform. Civil society strategies are more complex and challenging than capacity development activities in that they require the ability to identify, convene, and promote leadership and ownership of multiple CSO counterparts in a much broader ambit of action, with more intervening variables. There are many examples of failed CSO policy advocacy in Bangladesh and other developing countries. Avoiding their fate requires careful assessment and program design.
4. Promoting and sustaining community activism at the community level and measuring its impacts is especially challenging, requiring a deep understanding of local social structure and power relations. In the case of Bangladesh, recent social research shows the elitist and hierarchical nature of local political structures, their links to powerful family and business interests, and the increasingly violent nature of politics hinged on local strongmen and quasi-criminal elements. In this context, a strong local partner is essential for promoting community activism to prevent and mitigate political violence. Even so, in this setting, demonstrating the impacts of intervention require careful approaches to evaluation, not necessarily quantitative but rather using robust ethnographic methods.
5. Supporting social science research on elections related topics is a complex endeavor. Countries like Bangladesh have large contingents of CSOs, which are “omnivorous” in their grant-seeking, and will reply to research requests for proposals, often without having the experience and capacity to undertake rigorous research. To generate robust research projects, USAID needs to focus on building the capacity of institutions with the vocation, experience, and staffing that will provide experienced researchers with opportunities to carry out original, quantitative studies using data produced by USAID elections programs. Most research institutions do not have the resources to conduct their own surveys. USAID’s elections surveys can provide data sets that add value to these institutions’ existing institutional and human capacity, and advances social science understanding of elections topics.

# INTRODUCTION

To address the significant challenges to peaceful, credible, and transparent Parliamentary elections in 2014, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded the three-year, 8 million United States dollars (USDs) Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA) Program, implemented by the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). CEPPS' partner organizations include the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). The goal of BESA is to strengthen the integrity of election processes by engaging stakeholders on matters of campaign finance, mitigation of election related violence, and ensuring meaningful monitoring of the electoral environment before, during, and after elections. The current BESA program will end in January 2016.

Through its Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs' Evaluations (BDGPE) program, USAID/Bangladesh contracted Social Impact, Inc. (SI's) to undertake the final performance evaluation of BESA. This is one of seventeen performance evaluations planned under BDGPE and closely follows USAID's Evaluation Policy and guidance. This evaluation also uses SI's proprietary Evaluation, Quality, Use, and Impact (EQUI)<sup>™</sup> quality assurance approach and procedures to achieve high quality, influential evaluations that enhance development effectiveness. The evaluation team leader, BDGPE staff, and SI headquarters applied EQUI<sup>™</sup> checkpoints to monitor and improve evaluation activities and outputs over the course of the evaluation process.

The three-member team worked in Bangladesh from August 31 through September 22, 2015. The evaluation team, hereinafter referred to as "the team," conducted field work in Dhaka and one BESA program site outside of Dhaka, interviewing interlocutors directly involved with and knowledgeable of the BESA program activities, either individually or in focus group discussions (FGDs). In addition, the team reviewed reports, documents, and articles on election-related topics and those documents specific to BESA program activities. The team convened daily to review notes and materials prior to preparing the written evaluation. This report reflects the collective views of the entire team, based on the full range of interviews and available documentation.

In the main body of the report, this final performance evaluation sets out the development problem and USAID's response; discusses the methodology used by the team, along with the methodological issues and challenges that emerged in the course of the evaluation; summarizes the evaluation purpose and questions as set out in the evaluation Scope of Work (SOW); presents the main findings and conclusions in response to each evaluation question in the SOW; and ends with a set of program recommendations and lessons learned. There are annexes with the full SOW; data collection matrices and instruments used by the team; and conflict of interest forms for the team members. The annexes also contain several tables prepared by the team on the basis of BESA's own quarterly and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports submitted to USAID that summarize different aspects of the BESA program, but which were not incorporated into the findings narrative in the body of the report owing to space limitations.

# THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM AND USAID'S RESPONSE

## THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Elections are the first step for voters to express their views on the direction of their country. Better election processes, systems, and environments should result in higher quality candidates and improved democratic governance. Clean elections can also make elected governments more representative, transparent, and accountable. Election observation can contribute to public confidence in election results. Candidate wealth disclosure statements and transparent campaign financing can provide a safeguard against corruption. Mitigation of election violence ensures that the largest possible number of voters will be able to participate in the elections without fear of reprisals from rival political parties.

In Bangladesh, the conduct of elections, and particularly parliamentary elections, remains one of the most vexing issues in the country's short history of democratic government since 1971. Significant challenges to peaceful, credible, and transparent elections in Bangladesh include electoral violence, political party boycotts of elections, and administrative capability to conduct credible elections. These challenges reflect and magnify other issues in democratic governance. The post-independence Awami League (AL) government faced many challenges and, in 1975, was overthrown by the military. This triggered a series of military coups that resulted in a military-backed government--a short-lived government under the auspices of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), but which ended in another military coup in 1981. The military dictatorship lasted ten years, until it was finally swept aside by waves of popular protest. Democratic elections were held in 1991, in 1996 (the first democratic transfer of power in the country's history), and again in 2001. During this period, the AL and the BNP alternated in power, albeit accompanied by high levels of electoral violence and frequent allegations of election fraud.

In January 2007, a caretaker government with military backing declared emergency rule and postponed elections until December 29, 2008, when almost 70 million Bangladeshi voters casted ballots. The election was characterized by very high voter turnout and campaigns conducted vigorously but largely free of violence. Although widely acknowledged by both international observers and domestic stakeholders as the best administered elections in the country's history, the election success did not resolve problems in Bangladesh's electoral system or temper the violent partisan rivalries between the two major political parties. The passage of a set of constitutional amendments (most notably one that abolished the institution of the caretaker government during the election period) led the BNP to boycott the January 2014 parliamentary elections, resulting in 153 members of parliament elected unopposed.

Weakened rule of law and political accountability have contributed to the increasingly politicized nature of the Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB).<sup>2</sup> In the parliamentary elections and subnational elections, the ECB ignored many documented irregularities, stating that the irregularities were few and were magnified by the opposition and partisan media. The ECB declared the elections to be free and fair, which undermined the credibility of the election results and led to continued instability and partisan conflict. Since that election, there have been two sub-national elections (upazilas and city corporations)

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<sup>2</sup> Overall, as a recent democracy assessment noted, there are growing threats to political participation, competition, and inclusion in policymaking processes, accompanied by a radicalized political opposition and increased political violence See Andrew Green, Michael Calavan, William Cartier, and Shantanu Majumder, 2014. Bangladesh Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Assessment. USAID/Social Impact Inc. P. vii.

which were distinguished by election fraud, vote buying, inter-party violence, and intimidation.

## **USAID'S RESPONSE**

USAID has supported electoral programs in Bangladesh for many years. In 1995, USAID provided funding to IFES to provide technical assistance and commodities support to the ECB in support of the Electoral Training Institute (ETI). In 2003, USAID awarded a political party reform program under CEPPS to IRI and NDI. The program was originally scheduled to conclude shortly after the anticipated 2007 elections. However, the delay in conducting the election and a need to minimize the gap in USAID programming in this field resulted in several extensions before the program finally ended in 2009.

In the wake of the 2009 elections, donor agencies, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, ramped up their support for democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) programming. The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and the ECB expressed interest in strengthening election management. Post-2009, USAID, the European Union, and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) contributed to the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Strengthening Election Management in Bangladesh (SEMB) program. SEMB, which recently ended, provided technical assistance designed to enhance and further consolidate the institutional and professional capacities of the ECB, its secretariat, and local offices to deliver its mandated functions of conducting fair, credible, and transparent elections. In 2011, USAID also funded a political party project Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) project, focusing on promoting broader participation in Bangladeshi political parties and improving the environment for more responsive politics.

The BESA project was awarded in 2012, with a budget of 8.45 million USD, and with implementation to begin January 16, 2013 through January 15, 2016. The award contained three separate budgets, one for each of the CEPPS implementing partners (IPs): the IFES, IRI, and the NDI. While the request for applications (RFA) did not require it, the proposal submitted by CEPPS and approved by USAID supposed the operation of a separate country office for each IP. Each IP was given different program components to implement, with their respective indicators and targets, within an overarching program results framework and M&E plan.

This program and other interventions under the USAID/Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy Development Objective (DO) 1: "Citizen Confidence in Governance Institutions Increased," are directly aligned with the United States Foreign Assistance Program Objective of Governing Justly and Democratically, that will be achieved through Program Element 2.4.1: Civic Participation under Program Area 2.4: Civil Society. The results framework under which BESA operated that "support for increased citizen engagement and improved governance will generate increased demand for democratic practices and better services, which in turn, will culminate in improved accountability and responsiveness to citizen needs, thereby increasing citizen confidence in governance institutions." The original CEPPS program proposal subscribed to this development hypothesis by proposing to engage the ECB—and to a lesser extent civil society organizations (CSOs), media, and political parties—in programs designed to strengthen their capacity to monitor and deliver credible national elections in 2014, augmented by independent international polling observation and assessment missions.

The goal of this program was to strengthen the integrity of the election processes by comprehensively engaging stakeholders on matters of campaign finance, mitigation of election related violence, and ensuring meaningful monitoring of the electoral environment before, during, and after elections. This goal contributes to USAID/Bangladesh's DO 1. Activities under the program directly supported the achievement of Intermediate Result (IR) 1.1: Strengthened Political Processes and the sub-IR 1.1.2: Improved Electoral Processes; it further indirectly contributes to sub-IR 1.1.3: More Responsive Political Parties and IR 1.2: Greater Accountability and Transparency in Public Institutions. BESA was also conceived to contribute to the cross-cutting Sub IR: Informed Citizenry Actively Engaging in Democratic Processes, which will contribute to promoting accountability of governance institutions.

The BESA Results Framework is included in the evaluation scope of work (SOW) in Annex I. Table I below illustrates the program objectives that BESA established to achieve the overall goal of strengthening the integrity of elections processes.

**Table I: BESA Program Objectives and Intermediate Results**

<b>Objective 1: Increased compliance with campaign finance laws</b>	
CEPPS Objective 1.1 (IFES)	Strengthened analytical capacity of government bodies to audit candidate filings.
CEPPS Objective 1.2 (IRI)	Candidates have increased pressure to comply with campaign finance laws.
<b>Objective 2: Improved utility of long-term election monitoring</b>	
CEPPS Objective 2.1 (IRI)	A comprehensive body of knowledge that provides analysis of the conditions and attitudes surrounding the 2014 elections in order to maximize understanding of election dynamics among electoral stakeholders is created.
CEPPS Objective 2.2 (NDI)	International and citizen observers engage in sustained dialogue and action before, during, and after the elections.
<b>Objective 3: Reduced prevalence of election-related violence</b>	
CEPPS Objective 3.1 (IFES)	Improved capacity of formal and informal institutions to effectively resolve electoral disputes.
CEPPS Objective 3.2 (IFES)	Increased planning and coordination among electoral and security actors to better anticipate violence in order to prevent or manage it.

# PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of this final performance evaluation is to assess BESA's technical and programmatic validity, evaluate the implementers' performance in achieving the overall objective of the activity, evaluate the efficiency of the CEPPS mechanism, and assess the relevance of the program's approach and activities. The audience for this final performance evaluation includes USAID/Bangladesh, DFID, CEPPS partners (IFES, IRI, and NDI), the United States Embassy in Bangladesh, the USAID Asia Bureau, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors working for democratic governance, and other concerned development partners. This final performance evaluation report will be available in the Development Experience Clearinghouse.

## EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation reviews, analyzes, and evaluates the BESA program using the following prioritized questions. The evaluation delivers conclusions based on the findings, identifies future programming opportunities, and makes recommendations for improvement. In accord with the evaluation SOW, the evaluation addresses the following questions:

### Overall

- **Effectiveness:** To what extent has the BESA program been effective in achieving its planned objectives? What added value has USAID brought to the electoral environment in Bangladesh through BESA? Were there any unexpected outcomes?
- **Relevance:** To what extent are the project's objectives and activities undertaken still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh (response should reflect program restructuring that took place post 2014 elections)?
- **Efficiency:** Has CEPPS been an effective and efficient mechanism for addressing the BESA project objectives? What have been the main advantages and challenges in the management of the project through CEPPS? Have the consortium members coordinated adequately in function of project objectives?

### Component 1

- In the current political context, is promoting electoral reform in campaign finance (and in other electoral reform topics) still relevant and feasible? In light of the challenges in working with the GOB and ECB in particular, what other approaches should USAID consider in follow-on projects?

### Component 2

- How effective was BESA in strengthening domestic elections monitoring through partnerships with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs)? What alternative strategy could be taken for follow-on projects in strengthening domestic election monitoring?
- How effective was BESA in strengthening local NGOs and media in conducting research? (IRI)

### Component 3

- How effective was BESA in addressing election violence and security issues? What challenges did BESA face in this component and how did the project respond? What other approaches BESA/USAID can think of while engaging with GOB on sensitive issues such as election violence and security?
- How successful was the partnership between People Against Violence in Elections (PAVE) and DPR fellowship program in addressing election violence?

# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The information collected for this performance evaluation was analyzed by the four-person team, to establish credible answers to the questions and provide substantive recommendations for future USAID/Bangladesh programming. The evaluation methodology includes document review, key informant interviews (KIIs), and FGDs. The team used these qualitative methods and endeavored to triangulate findings from each source to confirm, cross validate, and/or corroborate findings.

There were 48 KIIs with electoral stakeholders, including USAID personnel, management, and staff from the CEPPS partner organizations, Bangladeshi CSOs, political parties, and other interested persons. Four FGDs were conducted with 22 participants from local partners and beneficiaries.

### Document review

- BESA program documents, quarterly reports, and work plans
- USAID contracting documents
- Sub-grantee contracts and reports
- Miscellaneous election-related reports, stories, and articles (See list in Annex IV)

### Key Informant Interviews

- 48 KIIs (16 female, 32 male)

### Focus Group Discussions

- Four FGDs with 22 participants (nine female, 13 male)

Table 2. Data Collection Methods

Method	Female	Male	Total
FGD	9	13	22
KII	16	32	48
Total	25	45	70

Consistent with USAID’s evaluation policy and recognizing the importance of a gender perspective in this evaluation, the team made every effort to ensure that research activities included female participants, female election monitors, and female supported CSOs. All participant level data was disaggregated by gender where possible (see Table 2).

## LIMITATIONS

One major limitation was the lack of consistency in the Quarterly Reports, whose structure and contents varied considerably between the three IPs, and also changed over time, making it difficult to follow the sequence and progress of program activities. Similarly, the M&E reporting was difficult to interpret. BESA reported separately a set of “F Indicators” for USAID and other performance management plan (PMP) indicators. The team also found it challenging to reconcile information from Quarterly Reports on training with the information in the “F indicators” and the project PMP

indicators.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes, the Quarterly Reports referred to the number of CSOs involved in training, without mentioning the number of people trained, making it difficult to understand the scale of the activities. While the Quarterly Reports dedicated significant space to describing the evolving political context, the description of the actual activities was often vague about important details. This lack of consistency and detail in project reporting and M&E made it challenging and time-consuming for the team to reach an understanding about the program performance overall and in individual components.

Security concerns did not prevent the team from conducting field visits where necessary, although time constraints, extreme traffic, and program activities limited the possibility of vehicle travel far outside Dhaka. Vehicle congestion during the pre-Eid season also hampered field work and scheduling of interviews in Dhaka. The team sought to interview members of the ECB and its secretariat through various channels, but failed. In addition, the team was unable to speak with any commissioners or staff of the ECB. This lack of interest by the ECB was noted throughout the BESA activities reports.

As with any assessment or evaluation, there are biases and other limitations that must be addressed through methodological or analytical methods. An evaluation of election related activities by multiple implementers, with multiple sources of funding, for a future activity design is subject to many of these issues:

- Recall bias may be present in both the KIIs and FGDs. Participants in multiple training activities may blend their experiences into a composite memory or response, e.g., staff who received training on several topics both before and during the evaluation period may not distinguish between them as separate activities in their responses. Also, some respondents may blend answers related to one election program or another, or those of another donor, and may meld experiences with BESA.
- Response bias is a common problem for program evaluations and assessments, particularly for highly technical DRG subsectors, such as election management. For example, trainees may give the interviewer positive remarks about an activity, like international training because s/he would like to go on similar trips in the future. The team expects that key points of contact, trainees, and partner organizations may understand that this evaluation will shape future program opportunities.
- Selection bias in the form of contacts provided by the implementers can mean that the team only hears from people with positive experiences. In the FGD conducted with community volunteers from the PAVE activity, FGD participants were all chosen by the BESA sub-grantee, which may have introduced bias. To counter this bias, and maximize the validity and reliability of the data, the FGD facilitators, Dr. Saifullah and Dr. Maruf, conducted the FGDs using techniques to ensure participation of all participants, encourage critical reflections on the program interventions, and by always asking follow-up questions to go beyond generic responses

To try to counter these possible biases, the team also carefully compared KII and FGD results with the BESA Quarterly Reports, M&E reports, other program reports as well as some of the activity reports and products of sub-grantees. This aided considerably in contextualizing and assessing the validity of the KII and FGD findings. These reports are cited profusely in the evaluation report.

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<sup>3</sup> These inconsistencies between the narrative reporting and the “F indicators” reporting of training outputs, for example, were found in FY 2014, Quarter 2, 3 and 4; and in FY 2015, Quarters 1, 2 and 3.

# FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

**Overall Question on Effectiveness: To what extent has the BESA program been effective in achieving its planned objectives? What added value has USAID brought to the electoral environment in Bangladesh through BESA? Were there any unexpected outcomes?**

## FINDINGS

To avoid repetition in the evaluation findings and conclusions, in this section the team focuses the analysis on the effectiveness of BESA activities during Year 1 and Year 2 of the program. The report turns to the BESA Year 3 activities in the following section of the report, in response to USAID's questions about the continued relevance of the BESA approach after the program redesign in Year 3 of the program. BESA was designed to provide electoral assistance during the lead-up to the anticipated 2013 or 2014 parliamentary election. It was to have a quick start-up in January 2013. However, the time needed for establishing the three separate offices and hiring staff varied for the three IPs. It got off to a slow start. As the summary tables of IP activities in Annex VI show, there was limited activity reported by BESA's three IPs during the first two or three reporting periods. Indeed, BESA/IRI reported 'no program activity' for most of the program objectives in the reports for Quarters 2 and 3 of Fiscal Year (FY) 2013.<sup>4</sup>

The major problem that emerged during the Year 1 activities was the unwillingness on the part of the ECB to engage with BESA activities, as reflected in all of the Quarterly Reports. In Year 1, the Quarter 3 report states the ECB viewed election security planning as the responsibility of the Home Ministry, and has not proactively engaged in the process of developing a security plan in advance of the January 2014 Parliamentary Election. There are numerous statements in BESA Quarterly Reports reflecting the lack of interest or response from the ECB through Year 1, whether on domestic observer guidelines, campaign finance enforcement, or election-related violence. This was reiterated in written comments received from CEPPS in response to the first draft of this report, noting that "they began to proactively engage with USAID/DFID and civil society partners in January 2014 ....to adjust program activities in response to the dramatic shift in Bangladesh's political landscape and fluid security environment".<sup>5</sup>

A political finance assessment and an election dispute resolution (EDR) assessment were conducted during Year 1, with the reports and recommendations provided to the ECB. But there is no indication that it was taken up by the ECB. Some ECB staff did participate in training conducted with other electoral stakeholders, including the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections (BRIDGE) training on political finance and election security. The Quarterly Reports show that the advisory groups created to support the Year 1 program activities, listed in Annex VI of this report, were not functional, as the GOB representatives declined to participate.

The activities under the responsibility of IRI, having to do with support for elections research—including survey research and creating pressure for parties and candidates to comply with campaign finance laws—faced some difficulties, particularly campaign finance monitoring activities, which were delayed to Year 2 after the cancellation of the Parliamentary elections. IRI's activities in this area focused almost exclusively on supporting a group of five CSOs to conduct monitoring of campaign finance as well as supporting media monitoring on this same issue. The survey research conducted by IRI faced fewer obstacles. Since the program began in January 2013, IRI has conducted four public opinion surveys, with

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<sup>4</sup> BESA Quarterly Reports for FY 2013, Quarters 2 and 3.

<sup>5</sup> In response to the first draft of this report, CEPPS submitted to USAID/Bangladesh a detailed memo, "Comments on the Draft Report for Evaluation of the 2013-2016 Bangladesh Election Support Activities Program", which clarified some aspects of the program implementation.

the fifth survey due to begin in late October 2015. The surveys polled the public about the state of the economy in Bangladesh, the direction the government was headed, and satisfaction with the performance of government agencies. The first survey completed in November 2013 was not released to the public. The survey showed that only one percent of those interviewed were interested in electoral reform issues, and 84 percent of those surveyed knew nothing about campaign finance rules. The second survey, released in January 2014, contained questions regarding the economy but nothing on the topic of campaign finance or elections reform. The third survey, released in September 2014, did include questions on campaign finance as did the fourth survey in June 2015.

While the main focus of BESA was ECB capacity development, it also contemplated activities with non-governmental actors, in particular IFES's proposed activities with an activist CSO, Odhikar, on election violence monitoring and alternative dispute resolution. Utilizing IFES' Electoral Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) methodology, Odhikar would "detect, deter, and diffuse electoral violence" in selected "election violence hot spots." Also, IFES would work with Odhikar on an alternative electoral dispute resolution to "establish community-based electoral violence prevention mechanisms in selected hotspot areas."<sup>6</sup> However, Odhikar was not approved by the NGO Affairs Bureau and unable to partner with BESA. In Year 2, IFES began to pilot an alternative strategy, through its support for community based groups, called People Against Elections Violence (PAVE). This will be discussed in detail in the section responding to the questions about the relevance of the BESA Component 3 activities.

In the component dedicated to supporting election observation, potential CSO partners were members of the Election Working Group (EWG), the main network of election monitoring organizations (EMOs) in Bangladesh, supported by The Asia Foundation (TAF) for over a decade, with 29 member EMOs at present and with funding from DFID. Despite the unique and predominant capacities of the EWG as a "local system," it apparently was not considered as a partner for BESA. While there is an Exclusivity Agreement from 2012, as explained by the EWG Director and TAF, in principle it would have been possible to negotiate an arrangement to allow BESA to work through the TAF/EWG mechanism.<sup>7</sup> TAF told the team that they had not been approached by the BESA partners or USAID to discuss how to leverage the capacity of EWG towards BESA's objectives. BESA ended up partnering with five CSOs outside of the EWG framework. In a final report on its election observation, NDI noted that four of its selected CSO partners had "little or no election observation experience."<sup>8</sup>

IRI was tasked to support research by Bangladeshi research centers to generate a "comprehensive body of knowledge that provides analysis of the conditions and attitudes" around elections and, more specifically, the 2014 elections: "National pre-and post-election polling conducted by IRI will help to inform the [research] studies about the electorate's knowledge of the given topics. CSOs and IRI will use this data to establish a starting point for the [research] reports, and will ensure that the issues reported on accurately reflect the sentiments expressed in the poll results."<sup>9</sup> However, as mentioned, in Year 1 of the program, IRI did not produce specific studies on the election reform issues. IRI appears to have recognized this problem: the FY 2014 Quarter 1 report states the intention to "more closely tie

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<sup>6</sup> See BESA Year 1 Work Plan, pp. 11-12. In the BESA Year 2 Work Plan, IFES stated that it would explore "other ways of monitoring election violence", p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> The agreement is intended to prevent EWG members from observing elections outside of the EWG framework, or receiving funding from other sources for that purpose. See the explanation of the agreement in the EWG website: [http://www.ewgbg.org/?page\\_id=126](http://www.ewgbg.org/?page_id=126).

<sup>8</sup> See "NDI Analysis of Citizen Election Observation of the 2014 Parliamentary and Upazila Elections", p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> BESA Cooperative Agreement, Program Description, p. 45.

quantitative survey component to most of its activities for research purposes,” “using smaller and more frequent surveys...to be used by civil society, media, and political parties.” It goes on to say that it will adjust its surveys to “closely match research,” referring to the sub-grants for conducting research.<sup>10</sup>

The research contracted by IRI was based on a request for proposals (RFPs) from legally established Bangladeshi NGOs, CSOs, academic and higher education institutions, research institutes, or comparable organizations.<sup>11</sup> The RFP elicited proposals from 23 organizations; agreements were finalized with four sub-grantees:

- Team Alternatives: Social Media and Generation Y Voters
- Jatya Nirbachon Porjobekkhon Parishad (JANIPOP): Barriers to Political and Electoral Participation for Persons with Disabilities
- Eminence: Who Gets Nominated and Why: A Demand-side Analysis of Political Recruitment
- Dr. Manzurul Manan: Bangladesh Democracy: Political Impediments and Structural Imperatives

This evaluation report will present more detailed findings related to the thematic content and quality of this research in the section responding to questions about BESAS’s Component 2 activities below. For now, responding to the general question about BESA’s effectiveness, the team notes that the evaluation criteria used by IRI do not emphasize experience in conducting social research.<sup>12</sup> The team finds that three sub-grantees do not have deep and relevant experience in conducting research. Subsequently, IRI reported constant difficulties with the quality of the sub-grantees’ research products, which delayed finalization of the research reports and summaries until Quarter 2 of FY 2015, just six months before the project was to enter close-out. Also, a review of the focus and contents of the research reports shows that none make use of IRI’s data from the four public opinion surveys.

In the area of election monitoring, NDI told the team that the intention was to improve the “quality” of observation, rather than focus on quantity. Nevertheless, the BESA Cooperative Agreement states that “the Institute will have directly trained 1000 master trainers in operationalizing the Global Principles. NDI would also track the numbers of observers and citizen activists trained by domestic groups in cascade trainings.”<sup>13</sup> These 1,000 Master Trainers/Regional Trainers, according to the Year 1 Work Plan, would then go on to train 15,000 domestic election monitors. For the Parliamentary elections in January 2014, however, following BESA and USAID guidance, the five partner EMOs—including Bangladesh Nari Pragati Shangha (BNPS), Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha (TMSS), Private Rural Initiatives Program (PRIP) Trust, Brotee Samaj Kallyan Sanghstha (Brotee), and the Jaago Foundation—canceled their training and monitoring efforts due to security concerns.

Despite the decision to cancel the observation effort for the 2014 Parliamentary elections, NDI decided to field observers for the upazila elections later that year. The BESA FY 2014 Quarter 3 report appears to back off NDI’s commitment to conduct cascade training of 15,000 observers. In doing so, the report blurs the distinction between the “training of trainers” for Master Trainers/Regional Trainers, and the training and fielding of observers, now referring to the “CEPPS/BESA program agreement to train over

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<sup>10</sup> BESA Quarterly Report for FY 2014 Quarter 1, pp. 7-8.

<sup>11</sup> IRI, “Request for Proposals Bangladesh: Innovative Research Studies”, 2014, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> The criteria were: technical merit (40 points), “technical understanding of the proposed research field and approach; technical methodology (25 points), “rigor and soundness of [the] methodology; and research team (15 points), or “organizational capacity ... and depth and relevance of previous research work”. IRI, 2014, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> BESA Cooperative Agreement, Program Description, p. 54.

1,000 citizen observers.”<sup>14</sup> Subsequently, in Year 2 between January and March 2014, BESA’s partner EMOs deployed just 950 observers to monitor 67 upazila elections from the five partner CSOs. When asked why so few observers were deployed, given the original BESA target of 15,000, and despite having completed its training of Master Trainers who were able to provide the required “cascade training” for the BESA EMOs, NDI management told the team that there was not sufficient budget.<sup>15</sup>

BESA enumerated difficulties in working with their partner CSOs in elections monitoring—specifically in data collection, reporting of the observation results, and communications. To improve their capacity, writing workshops were held and NDI provided technical assistance to the EMO staff. A NDI assessment done in December 2014 noted that it took three rounds of technical assistance and report editing of the observer report prepared by Brotee, which covered the activities of all of the five partner EMOs.<sup>16</sup> The Brotee report was eventually finalized, incorporating attachments from the other EMOs. In early 2015, NDI, Brotee, and Jaago Foundation met the Election Commissioner to present the final 2014 upazila election observation report and discuss its findings. However, the team was unable to verify further use of this report, for example, to improve the work of other EMOs.

The BESA Quarterly Reports presented in Year 1 document the lack of engagement with the ECB on BESA activities. The FY 2013 Quarter 4 report states that “...although the prospects for major contributions to electoral reform in the short term are limited, there is willingness among some senior political and government stakeholders for dialogue and possible interparty cooperation to discuss electoral reform priorities...”<sup>17</sup> It also noted that a representative from CEPPS would travel to Dhaka at the end of January 2014 to assess the post-election environment as well as consult with USAID and the IPs to discuss the structure of the award going forward. However, the Year 2 Work Plan still puts as key assumptions the ECB’s continued willingness to work towards BESA’s program objectives:<sup>18</sup>

- The ECB continues to be engaged in reform and improvement, and remains open to international assistance;
- The ECB and its ETI are willing to plan and implement political finance and EDR trainings in collaboration with IFES;
- The ECB will be open to collaboration/consultation with other electoral stakeholders such as political parties and CSOs regarding draft legislation, codes of conduct, etc.;
- The ECB is open to and interest in establishing a Campaign Finance Working Group and a Political Finance Wing within the ECB;
- The ECB is open to collaboration with other security actors on electoral security planning; and
- Political parties, through Democracy International (DI), and the ECB are open to discussions about a Code of Conduct for electoral security.

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<sup>14</sup> BESA Quarterly Report for FY 2014 Quarter 3, p. 25. No mention is made of further cascade training.

<sup>15</sup> Nor was it a question of timing. It was clear from the Quarterly reports that BESA was anticipating the upazila elections, and foresaw no impediment in conducting observation for these elections, reporting that “while political violence interrupted training activities prior to parliamentary elections, CEPPS partners have been able to train observers and monitor the upazila polls”. BESA Quarterly Report for FY 2014 Quarter 1, p. 9; and Quarter 2, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> The report titled “NDI Analysis of Citizen Election Observation of the 2014 Parliamentary and Upazila Elections”, concluded that “As with other inexperienced election monitoring groups around the world, some partners had difficulty transitioning from their identity as human rights advocacy organizations to ... election observation groups”; pp. 5-6.

<sup>17</sup> BESA Quarterly Report for FY 2013, Quarter 4, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> BESA Year 2 Work Plan, pp. 2-3.

The team reviewed BESA's Quarterly Reports for Year 2, which document clearly that these assumptions had not held. The Year 2 Quarter 1 report notes that the ECB had still not responded to the assessment report on campaign finance that had been presented in September the previous year. While ECB explained that its dedication to the January 2014 Parliamentary elections had prevented it from focusing on working with BESA in 2013, the Year 2 Quarter 2 report notes that now the problem was the ECB's dedication to organizing the upcoming upazila elections in 2014. IFES reported that the ECB was "eager" to return to working with BESA after these elections.<sup>19</sup>

In Quarterly Reports, other program documents, and in responses from CEPPS to the draft version of the report, it was recognized that by the end of 2013, the BESA partners were well aware of the obstacles to ECB participation. However, according to interviews with NDI and IFES Chief of Parties (COPs), the USAID COR, and the BESA Quarterly Reports for Quarters 1 and 2 of Year 2, the decision was to "continue to engage with the ECB." While it was recognized that the program needed a redesign in approach and activities, in Year 2 there was only modest progress towards this end, as IFES began to prioritize activities with civil society: developing the PAVE concept that emerged out of its work the Women against Violence in Elections (WAVE) groups; and starting to work with SHUJAN on the design of an election financing monitoring database and website.

Here the team wishes to highlight the CEPPS' memo in response to the first draft of this evaluation report, in that it explains a "a series of meetings in Dhaka with USAID, DFID, local CSO partners, political party representatives, and other international IPs to identify opportunities to revise the BESA program approach."<sup>20</sup> These consultations resulted in a series of meetings with the Mission in January 2014, to present "detailed plans for revising the work plan." The proposed program approach supposed "a shift away from collaboration with the ECB." However, as explained by the IFES and NDI COPs and the BESA COR, the Mission instructed BESA to not disengage with the ECB, to continue to insist on joint activities if possible, while agreeing to incorporate into the program new activities oriented towards civil society engagement in electoral reform.

The new approach was formalized in the Year 3 Work Plan, a year after presenting the program redesign proposal. It was based on a "theory of change" that gave priority of place to a "national network" of political champions and civil society representatives" who would create a "sustainable platform" for expressing citizen demand for good governance. As proposed, there were new activities oriented towards civil society engagement. However, with the exception of the PAVE component, these new activities had limited reach—with most activities involving support to small advisory/working groups. While the emphasis of the Year 3 Work Plan is on civil society advocacy, there were no budget resources available for communications and dissemination strategies beyond the small working groups, a few conferences, and a dedicated website for an "Ek Bangladesh" strategy aimed at engaging young people. These Year 3 activities will be analyzed in more detail in the following section of the report.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The design of the BESA program was based on several critical assumptions regarding support from both the GOB and the ECB, which for the most part, were not met. Some of the critical assumptions specific to the GOB and ECB were:

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<sup>19</sup> BESA FY 2014 Quarter 2 Report. IFES reports on a meeting with the ECB "Both the Secretary and Additional Secretary were welcoming of CEPPS/IFES' assistance, and eager to move forward following the completion of the upazila elections.", p. 5

<sup>20</sup> In response to the first draft of this report, CEPPS submitted to USAID/Bangladesh a detailed memo, "Comments on the Draft Report for Evaluation of the 2013-2016 Bangladesh Election Support Activities Program", which clarified some aspects of the program implementation.

- Trained members of the ECB will utilize the knowledge gained in trainings to audit campaign finance expenditure reports as well as make recommendations to amend law regarding the audit of campaign filings. *[Some election commission staff did participate in limited training, but no improved auditing was conducted by the ECB—not met]*
- Electoral stakeholders are willing to participate in ECB consultations to discuss campaign finance reform. *[Stakeholders willing to discuss, but the ECB did not engage with them—not met]*
- International election observation contributes to election integrity. *[International election observation was cancelled in December 2014 due to boycott by major political parties—not met]*
- Increased planning and coordination among electoral and security actors to better anticipate violence to prevent or manage it. *[ECB stated electoral security was concern of Ministry of Home Affairs and did not engage in this area—not met]*

BESA's objectives were not reached in Years 1 and 2. Interest in the programmatic topics on the part of the main counterpart, the ECB, was limited. Although BESA continued dialogue with the ECB, this was not effective. The security situation and the turmoil surrounding the 2014 Parliamentary election limited election observation and campaign finance monitoring activities. NDI did present the ECB with recommendations for election observer guidelines. However, there was no substantive response. But beyond the lack of interest of the ECB and the security situation, in Years 1 and 2 there were other implementation issues in those activities that did not depend on ECB interest. The team finds that BESA's activities in support of strengthened elections observation and campaign finance monitoring were very small in scale, involving only five partner CSOs, which reduced their impacts considerably.

BESA did not pursue an agreement with EWG to leverage its decade of experience and installed capacity, opting to partner with five CSOs outside of the EWG framework, four of whom had substantive experience in elections monitoring, which was reflected in their poor performance in systematizing and reporting observation efforts. This contradicts USAID Forward guidance on the use of local systems to leverage the contributions of multiple and interconnected actors towards achieving and sustaining development outcomes.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the questionable selection of partner CSOs, NDI did not mobilize its Master Trainers to carry out cascade training for monitoring of the 2014 upazila elections, and reports having fielded fewer than 1,000 observers, despite having committed to 15,000.

For its part, IRI, too, faced delays in Year 1 in implementing activities around campaign finance monitoring with CSOs. In Year 2, however, IRI completed the training of the same five CSO partners who participated in the elections observation activity and mobilized a very small monitoring effort in the upazila elections. There was no follow on to the campaign finance activity with other CSOs. IRI was able to complete its planned public opinion surveys, but they were not used by the research sub-grantees. The elections research supported by IRI was presented very late, in the second Quarter of Year 3, which suggests a major performance issue in selecting and managing the partner CSOs.

The BESA reports recognized ongoing problems with any and all activities with the ECB through all of Year 1. In addition, there were detailed discussions with USAID at the beginning of Year 2, including the formal presentation of a new program design, but this did not translate into a new approach until the beginning of Year 3. Meanwhile, the Year 2 Work Plan shows no serious consideration of the political obstacles. Considering that none of the critical assumptions set out in the Agreement and Work Plans had not been met, an appropriate response might have to issue a partial stop work order to allow for a complete restructuring. The team considers that this was a significant performance failing. While the instructions from the Mission were to engage with the ECB, this did not impede the program from embarking on a rapid refocus, activity design and modified Work Plan at any time in 2014. IFES showed

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<sup>21</sup> USAID, Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development”, 2014.

itself to be proactive in this sense, initiating two activities in Year 2 with a civil society focus, but the major redesign of program activities was not carried out until the first few months of Year 3.

**Overall Question on Relevance: To what extent are the project’s objectives and activities undertaken still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh (response should reflect program restructuring that took place post 2014 elections)?**

## FINDINGS

BESA’s Year 3 Work Plan proposed a national “platform” of prominent reform minded actors dedicated to advancing a nonpartisan reform agenda.<sup>22</sup> BESA and other international implementers would work in the background while national partners would be the drivers for and faces of the reform effort. The concept paper indicates possible members of each group, objectives of each group, and examples of some of the activities, targeted audiences, and meetings. Additional formal and informal BESA working groups were identified in the Year 3 Quarterly Reports and a BESA produced a paper explaining ‘Ek Bangladesh’ (One Bangladesh), a communications and outreach strategy using a dedicated website to attract young people to policy debates.

The Year 3 Quarter 1 report indicated that BESA was working toward the new theory of change and had developed a broad integrated approach—moving towards activities that will generate demand for better governance from civil society. The report goes on to identify some of the critical assumptions:

- Domestic election observer groups continue to be interested in contributing to post-election efforts and have resources necessary to engage in post-election activities.
- Electoral stakeholders have an interest in participating in reform dialogues.
- Media outlets have an interest in reporting on campaign finance issues.
- Stakeholders will work together on electoral reform on a multiparty basis.
- Target CSOs are able to absorb technical assistance around advocacy and have the resources to engage in advocacy.
- Key Bangladeshi citizens and partner CSOs have capacity and civic space to pursue the electoral reform agenda as per the implementation strategy outlined in the Year 3 Work Plan.

BESAS’s Year 3 strategy for creating demand for electoral reform was based on the mobilization of opinion leaders to participate and lead the project’s reform agenda through working groups. A list of all of the 18 working groups created by BESA during or Years 1 to 3 are listed in Annex VIII. The groups active in the Year 3 activities are Table 3. The team calls attention to their small size.

**Table 3: BESA Working Groups Active in Year 3\***

Name	Purpose	Members
WAVE Advisory Group	New name for Women’s Committee to Deter Electoral Violence	Women leaders, political party representatives, and members of CSO’s working on gender focused initiatives

<sup>22</sup> “If thought leaders, key political champions and civil society representatives form a national network, increase their knowledge regarding possibilities for reform, prioritize achievable reform objectives and develop a concerted approach... then a sustainable platform will be created for citizens to demand that their government be more accountable to its people, and facilitate inclusive, credible and transparent elections in which citizens’ fundamental rights and freedoms are realized in a safe and secure electoral environment.” BESA Year 3 Work Plan, p. 2.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Members</b>
Group on Political Governance	Political dialogue group	Prominent Bangladeshi citizens and international partners
EK Bangladesh Working Groups (two or five groups)	To make a direct link between increasing technical expertise in creating demand for better electoral governance	CEPPS partners, SHUJAN, and Jaago
Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group	Provide technical expertise BESA acts as Secretariat	SHUJAN, Transparency International Bangladesh, and IRI
Election Conflict and Security Working Group	Share information on causes of electoral conflict	Dhaka University, the Bangladesh Institute for Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), and Ananya Kallyan Sangshtha from the Chittagong Hills Tracts.
Informal Advisory Group of Next Generation Leaders	Provide input on initiatives in various areas	Educated young people interested in political issues
Youth Advisory Working Group	Plan policy breakfasts	Educated young people interested in political issues
Ambassadors for Peace	Mobilize people within their community	PAVE training participants who have an interest in serving as advocates for peace

\*Information found in CEPPS Work Plans, 2013, 2014, 2015 and IFES Working Groups Summary

The team paid particular attention to the activities conducted with the advisory group of “next generation leaders,” as it was deemed by BESA program management (IFES and NDI COPs) as one of the most important of the groups established in support of the new Year 3 program strategy. In January 2015, BESA/NDI identified nine next-generation leaders to be members the BESA sponsored advisory group which would lead the project’s civil society advocacy platform, four of whom are women: 1) Zafar Sobhan, Editor, Dhaka Tribune, 2) Saif Kamal, Founder, Toru-Idea Tree, 3) Nausheen Khan, Research Associate, Khan Foundation, 4) Korvi Rakshand, Founder, Jaago Foundation, 5) Khaled Mahmood Mustafa, Senior Manager, Jaago Foundation, 6) Nazim Farhan Chowdhury, Managing Director, AdCom, 7) Syeed Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Institute of Informatics and Development (IID), 8) Hana Shams Ahmed, Coordinator, International Chittagong Hills Tracts (CHT) Commission, and 9) Miran Ali, Managing Director, Bitopi Group.

NDI’s COP told the team that the next generation leaders’ advisory group main function was to generate discussion, develop public awareness, provide input on program initiatives, and generate recommendations for policy advocacy. In that the members of the group are all from elite families with considerable influence in business, politics, civil society, and media, it was understood that they would help to convene other opinion leaders to discuss the electoral reform agenda. In practice, this meant organizing a series of conferences with opinion leaders, called “Breakfast Policy Meetings,” on different electoral reform topics. Each event had a prominent keynote speaker, followed by a discussion among the participants (on average 40 participants). The meetings are summarized in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Policy Breakfasts Year 3**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Keynote Presenter(s)</b>	<b>Participants(No.)</b>
<b>March 5, 2015</b>	Delhi elections and lessons for Dhaka City Corporations	Four mayoral candidates for Dhaka City Corporation elections	39
<b>April 2, 2015</b>	Future Direction of Bangladesh's Foreign Policy	Honorable State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sahriar Alam	44
<b>May 7, 2015</b>	Improving Political Participation in Bangladesh	Professor Imtiaz Ahmed	32
<b>May 28, 2015</b>	Empowerment of Women in Bangladesh	Honorable Speaker of the National Parliament, Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury	50
<b>August 23, 2015</b>	Bengali Culture and Identity	Honorable State Minister for Cultural Affairs, Asaduzzaman Noor	41

For the implementation of the Policy Breakfast series, NDI formed a partnership with the IID—a research institute. IID’s CEO was the de facto coordinator of the next generation leaders advisory group who organized the group meetings and worked with NDI to conduct the Policy Breakfasts. IID was also responsible for the design and management of the “Ek Bangladesh.” The proceedings of the Policy Breakfasts were posted on the Ek Bangladesh site (this will be discussed below in this section).

The team interviewed four of the participants in the Policy Breakfasts, who were positive about the events, saying that they were practical and the discussions less rhetorical than the public events usually organized by donors. The absence of media coverage allowed participants to speak more freely than is usual. One of the interviewees noted that the participants included many people seen to be opinion leaders in national media programs, underscoring the event’s elite nature, noting, too, that there were no representatives from broad-based, membership associations (unions, labor unions, cooperatives, etc.). However, another participant interviewed by the team noted the lack of relevance of some topics discussed in the events with BESA’s overall policy agenda focused on electoral reform.

While the advisory group members were positive about the Policy Breakfasts, they stated that they did not understand BESA’s overall policy reform advocacy strategy or how these meetings contributed to it. One said that they were never given a formal document explaining the strategy; “we were unsure about the exact purpose of the group” other than identifying invitees and other aspects of the breakfast meetings. They all noted the lack of any follow up, recommendations, policy advocacy, etc., beyond what appeared to be one-off events. They suggested to the team that the events be more inclusive, and the content/issue focus connect to specific advocacy strategies, with well-defined follow-up activities within the Ek Bangladesh platform. The CEO of IID was very positive, noting that IID plans to continue to hold the meetings even after BESA finishes, with support from other donors.

The team conducted two FGDs, asking other civil society representatives and journalists whether the campaign and political finance reform issue was relevant in Bangladesh, the team received mixed responses. The journalists recognized that the public was generally not “that much interested,” while the CSO leaders thought that though interest was low, it would be possible to raise interest through an appropriate communications strategy. The team also calls attention to the results of the first IRI survey

in Year 1 of the program, which indicated that one percent of respondents thought that election reform was a priority issue. BESA reports having conducted two small FGDs in May 2013 on campaign finance. A BESA report on Campaign/Political Finance in Bangladesh (dated October 2013) concludes that there is a demand among “a certain segment” of the population for more information on campaign finance compliance, but notes that the participants in BESA’s FGDs also highlighted the views of “other segments” of the population that care little about campaign finance compliance. In a recent “Policy Breakfast” convened by BESA/NDI, the majority of the 30 participants in this closed event did not support a motion that Bangladesh required electoral reforms.

BESA reports, too, that it met with leaders of political parties at the beginning of Year 2 to discuss electoral reform issues. The Year 3 Work Plan states that “the Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group will discuss what areas of the legal and regulatory framework should be strengthened and strategize on how to hold consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders so that suggested reforms involve input from political parties, candidates, civil society and the media, amongst others.” Beyond these initial consultations, the team found no substantive involvement of political parties in BESA Year 3 activities to promote electoral reforms. Political party leaders do not participate in any of the BESA-supported working groups. However, local leaders do participate in PAVE activities.

Another element in the Year 3 strategy, mentioned above, was the creation of a website with the purpose of promoting youth engagement in policy reform issues, including electoral reform.<sup>23</sup> The website contains sections on the recent Dhaka City Corporations elections, including a youth manifesto and review of policy issues in the elections; the NDI/IID Policy Breakfasts; the elections research briefs written by the four IRI grantees (Team Alternatives, Dr. Manzurul Mannan, JANIPOP, and Eminence). It contains other BESA products: Reserved Seats Fact Sheet; Election Observers Manual; Guide for Communication and Advocacy; Election Observer Training Guidelines; and Declaration of Global Principles.

It is notable that the products of IRI’s program activities on media monitoring from Year 2 of the BESA program were not presented and discussed in the Policy Breakfasts, nor uploaded onto the Ek Bangladesh site. The IRI funded research on media coverage has some critical analysis of media issues in elections, but which was not prioritized in the ongoing policy discussions. The team’s review of the Quarterly Reports and other BESA program documents does not find any evidence that the design of IRI’s survey work in Year 3 was articulated with the planning for the Year 3 policy advocacy work led by NDI, nor with the specific topics or policy issues that would be discussed in the Policy Breakfasts. The IFES presence in the website is also attenuated, with no links to WAVE or PAVE.

The Ek Bangladesh website does not appear to be generating high levels of youth participation (this would have to be verified with traffic statistics, which were not available). An on-line seminar on right to information implementation attracted 54 participants; and the online meeting on the results of IRI’s most recent public opinion survey attracted 11 participants. None of the other sections have generated a single comment. Beyond the next-generation leaders group convened by NDI, none of the BESA partners or grantees carries out activities with youth that are articulated with the website.

The PAVE activity, with The Hunger Project (THP), is relatively small-scale in the Bangladesh context and is still incipient. The recent June 2015 report on THP indicates 1,721 people have been reached through their efforts. The FGD conducted with PAVE participants suggests that the focus is more on “political violence” writ large, than on electoral violence per se. The FGDs suggest that PAVE volunteers interact with middle-level political activists, rather than with the party presidents and secretaries at the upazila and district levels, upazila chairs or Members of Parliament (MPs). In that the PAVE activity did

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<sup>23</sup> See: <http://ekbangladesh.com.bd/>

not include a robust M&E component, it is difficult to know what impact, if any, it might have on political party violence. PAVE's M&E approach has been based on self-assessment of training participants, or reported activities in FGDs. The question of PAVE's M&E approach is discussed in more detail below in the response to USAID's questions about the effectiveness of Component 3 and success in the PAVE activities.

## CONCLUSIONS

Year 3 refocused the program towards creating support from civil society for electoral reforms, and less interaction with the GOB and ECB. The activities continue to emphasize the BESA thematic areas of campaign finance, election monitoring, and electoral violence. BESA's own survey research shows that a tiny proportion of people see electoral reform as a priority issue. The activities conducted by BESA IPs also show mixed opinions of opinion leaders and participants about the relevance of the project's overall electoral reform agenda for civil society. The team's own interviews and FGDs show a similar lack of consensus among CSO leaders and journalists. These findings suggest that an advocacy approach to electoral reform is going to face strong headwinds. This is not to say that it should not be considered, rather that it needs a pragmatic assessment of the challenges and resource requirements.

There was no buy-in from political parties into the BESA Year 3 policy reform activities, thus it is hard to gauge how much support there is—the working assumption seems to be that there is little support. Political parties and vitally important electoral stakeholders might be opposed to electoral reforms, in particular campaign finance reforms. In this sense, one of the critical assumptions of the Year 3 Work Plan is questionable: “Stakeholders will work together on electoral reform on a multiparty basis.” As several Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) reports have noted, MPs are implicated in many areas of public sector corruption and derive significant rents from these activities, some of which they use to finance their campaigns. It is difficult to see what incentives the sitting MPs from AL would have in the area of campaign finance. This, combined with the weak support from the general public for electoral reform and ambiguous support from the opinion leaders convened by BESA leads to a conclusion that advancing this reform agenda is going to be very difficult and might require significant investments in communications and advocacy efforts to make progress in the current circumstances.

The team notes that at the time of the evaluation, the Year 3 advocacy activities had only been under way for a few months. In addition to their incipient nature, the small scale of the activities makes it particularly difficult to evaluate their relevance. The groups convened by BESA involve just a handful of CSOs and 20 to 30 people. The Ek Bangladesh website has few interactive features; it is not at all “content rich,” and its limited contents have not been transformed into formats that would interest youth. How this weak “platform” can effectively support reform efforts is not clear. In the following section of this report, the evaluation will look at the question of the scale of BESA activities in greater detail; for now, one major question is how relevant can such small scale activities be?

The problem of scale is compounded by the weak articulation between the different program activities. Although the objectives include presenting joint correspondence to relevant stakeholders, joint research and fact-finding initiatives, and producing internal and public documents on specific electoral issues, and despite the relatively large number of groups envisioned by BESA, the team did not find a clear, integrated strategy for taking the working group activities into a broader policy reform debate. Concretely, the team did not find a broader communications or outreach strategy to accompany the working group activities. From the review of the Quarterly Reports, interviews with advisory group members, and BESA program management, the team concludes that the results of their deliberations have so far remained within a closed circle of BESA program participants.

**Overall Question on Efficiency: Has CEPPS been an effective and efficient mechanism for addressing the BESA project objectives? What have been the main advantages and**

## **challenges in the management of the project through CEPPS? Have the consortium members coordinated adequately in function of project objectives?**

### **FINDINGS**

The CEPPS implementation of BESA brought international expertise, experience, and best practices from each of the IPs to address the program objectives. CEPPS mobilized experts as COPs to provide inputs into technical assistance, training, and outreach. The decision to open three separate offices and maintain three resident expat COPs—instead of one office and an expat COP/Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) team—cost the BESA program an additional 2.3 million USD, equivalent to more than 25 percent of the original budget.<sup>24</sup> Two of the IP offices are in the same building, on the same floor, right next to one another. The third IP office is located in another area but quite close by. In total, the three offices employ 16 local staff members and four expat staff.

The four expat staff members provided leadership and expertise in engaging with the ECB and non-governmental counterparts as well as some technical assistance. The team’s review of BESA reports and program documents, however, indicate that during many quarters, there was a very low level of program activities conducted by each office. Annex VI of this report presents summary tables of the activities of each of the BESA IPs, by quarter. Looking at these data from the BESA reports, it is possible to get an idea of the scale of the main activities conducted by the IPs in each year.

The summary of BESA program activities certainly does not capture all of the activities, particularly the numerous meetings held with the ECB and other electoral stakeholders, especially during Years 1 and 2, as part of the effort of the COPs to stay engaged with the GOB. With that important caveat, the findings show that of the three offices, IFES appears to have been the most active in initiating and conducting discrete program activities from one quarter to the next, especially in Years 2 and 3. This reflects, to some extent, IFES’ higher budget within the original BESA budget allocation, its original task allocation within the program, and the additional funding received from DFID for the Year 3 activities, particularly for the scaling up of PAVE.<sup>25</sup> NDI and IRI show a lower level of program activity, even in Year 3, as the program shifted away from work with the ECB towards partnering with CSOs.

BESA’s training effort for Years 1, 2 and the first two quarters of Year 3, including the cascade training funded by BESA for the five EMOs, was 3,542 people, but 87 percent of the people trained were in the EMO training in Year 2 and the PAVE training in Year 3.<sup>26</sup> The other training, technical assistance, and outreach activities were all very small. In the previous sections, the report findings highlighted the relatively small scale of the program activities conducted by BESA in Year 3. By reviewing the Quarterly Reports, it is clear that in Years 1 and 2, the program activities were also very small in scale. In particular, the election observation supported by NDI with five CSO partners to train 100 Master Trainers, and the campaign finance monitoring through 17 master trainers from the five CSOs supported by IRI, who subsequently trained 100 observers to conduct monitoring in 10 upazilas. This is a small effort, in the context of the 2014 upazila elections, which were held in 480 upazilas. The “cascade training” by the master trainers and the observation activities were not funded by BESA. Beyond the election monitoring, the other training activities delivered by the three BESA IPs during the first two years of the program typically had a reach of between 20 to 30 people.

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<sup>24</sup> This calculation is an estimate based on the BESA summary budget information provided to the team. The estimate considered long-term technical assistance salaries and fringe benefits for expat COPs and local administration staff deemed “duplicate” across the three offices, office rentals, car rentals, and G&A.

<sup>25</sup> In the original BESA budget, IFES was allocated 3.2 million USD, as against 2.4 million USD each for IRI and NDI. Its projected personnel (labor and fringe) budget was more than double that of IRI and NDI. The team did not receive any information about the allocation of the DFID funding.

<sup>26</sup> These numbers are taken from the “F Indicators” tables in the BESA Quarterly Reports for Years 1, 2 and 3.

It will be recalled that the original budget of BESA was 8 million USD, subsequently reduced to 7.7 million USD. Other recent projects in the USAID/Bangladesh DRG portfolio offer a useful point of comparison. The Strengthening Democratic Local Governance (SDLG) project, implemented by TetraTech ARD, had a budget of 19.2 million USD, and trained over 36,000 local government officials and volunteers. The Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices (PRODIP) project, implemented by TAF and State University of New York/Center for International Development, had a budget of 14.2 million USD and trained 3,300 people. In addition, the DPR project, now under implementation by Democracy International, has a budget of 12.3 million USD and has trained 3,496 people to date (as of mid-way through the program).<sup>27</sup>

These projects have budgets ranging from 150 percent up to more than 200 percent of the BESA budget. They all have operated in multiple regions of the country, managed a large number of sub-grantees, and delivered training and technical assistance to relatively large numbers of people. The point that the team wants to make is that all of these projects have been managed by a single project office (even in the case of PRODIP, which had two different IPs), using different configurations of United States Nationals (USNs) and cooperating country national (CCN) long-term technical assistance for the management teams (USN COP and a USN or CCN DCOP), and varying intensity of use of USN short-term technical assistance for technical assistance and training activities. In this respect, compared to BESA, they have a much leaner operational structure and smaller USN management team.

BESAS's engagement with CSOs, use of sub-grantees, or training outputs were not higher than these other projects with similar or even much larger scales of operations. The CEPPS' commitment to maintaining the three country offices in Bangladesh was seen clearly in Year 2, when faced with USAID funding constraints and the possibility of a budget cut in excess of 2 million USD, the three BESA IPs did not propose to close any of the three offices. Rather, according to the Year 3 Work Plan narrative, the IPs proposed to keep the BESA office structure as it was and close out program activities earlier.<sup>28</sup>

To try to get a sense of the "order of magnitude" of this commitment to maintaining three offices, it is useful to bring in BDGPE's evaluations of training conducted by the other DRG programs. Direct daily training costs per person can vary between 30 USD and 80 USD, depending on whether it is residential, the size of the group, and location. Using the 2.4 million USD that was spent in maintaining two additional country offices, this represents a potential of 30,000 to 80,000 person days of training and other support that BESA could have dedicated to election observation and monitoring. NDI told the team that the direct costs of fielding Election Day observers was 25 USD per person; the total cost for BESA to have supported a large scale observation effort of 15,000 observers was 375,000 USD. Not having dedicated such a large proportion of the budget to three offices would have freed up budget resources to support this much larger scale of election observation (or campaign finance monitoring). Having these resources would have allowed for a much larger scale advocacy initiative.

A review of the program activities shows duplicative work within BESA. Two different BESA IPs both

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<sup>27</sup> Budget and training figures are based on data collected by the BDGPE project in the course of its evaluations of the SDLG, PRODIP and DPR projects.

<sup>28</sup> "In a letter dated December 18, 2014, USAID informed CEPPS that no additional funds would be obligated to the BESA award, reducing the total estimated amount of the award from \$8,450,000 to \$6,100,000. Based on subsequent discussions with USAID, CEPPS understands that additional funding of \$1,000,000 may be available in June 2015. The CEPPS partners have revised the work plan to adjust activities given the reduced resources. Activities that could be conducted if additional resources become available in June are in italics and highlighted. Based on currently available resources, CEPPS/NDI and CEPPS/IFES will end its component of the program on June 30, 2015. CEPPS/IRI intends to conduct activities through the expiration of the grant in January 2016". BESA Year 3 Work Plan, p. 3.

worked in the area of campaign finance and election monitoring. In addition, although the IPs told the team that they attempted not to duplicate activities, all three partners conducted training programs and encouraged participation from the same partner CSOs. As mentioned above, the five CSO sub-awardees for election monitoring also participated in the campaign finance monitoring activities, thereby working with two different IPs at the same time and reducing the project's reach in capacity development. Finally, BESAS's activities overlap in relation with other USAID funded programs: reviewing the presentations of public opinion surveys conducted through BESA/IRI and the surveys produced by DPR, there is no clear differentiation in the surveys' thematic focus.

The advocacy work initiated in Year 3 shows a lack of coordination among the BESA partners. In the case of IFES and NDI, each partner appears to be working separately with its dedicated advisory groups. The "Ek Bangladesh" website, which, according to IFES and NDI project management, was intended to bring together the different advocacy initiatives into a single platform, does not take up the different program outputs from the three BESA partners and transform them for a youth audience. The IFES and IRI work on media monitoring is not featured in the website. The results of the IRI surveys are not presented in a way that might attract interest from a youth audience (for example, segmenting the analysis by age and inviting discussion and reflection on youth involvement and perspectives on policy issues). The IFES program activities on campaign finance, and particularly on women's participation and community initiatives to prevent electoral violence (PAVE), are not incorporated into the website.

## CONCLUSIONS

The team considers that the high share of program spending going towards maintaining three country offices for the CEPPS partners contributed to frequent underutilization of BESA's "installed capacity" for programming. Rather, even if there had not been obstacles to the implementation of capacity development activities with the ECB, or the cancellation/postponement of activities due to political violence, the BESA project had an overly-large management structure for level of activity each IP undertook. The team estimates that the costs of maintaining three separate IP offices instead of a single BESA project office cost the project an additional 2.4 million USD.

In comparative terms, the BESA management structure was much costlier in relation to other recent projects in the USAID/Bangladesh DRG portfolio. The BESA management structure, with its three separate offices, three USN COPs, and their respective CCN administrative staff, consumed a large proportion of the budget than in other projects and limited BESA's reach. The team gave examples of how dedicating more budget resources towards programming could have extended by a large order of magnitude the reach and eventual impacts of the BESA project.

The large proportion of funding allocated towards operating three country offices meant that, while the Year 3 activities incorporated an advocacy component, this was a very small scale effort based on the small advisory groups and the dedicated website (Ek Bangladesh). Not to mention, this advocacy component contained mostly BESA products without any transformation or orientation towards the youth audience, and which has not attracted a large number of people. More importantly, there appear to be no funds allocated for major communications and outreach around the selected electoral reform issues, other than the Policy Breakfasts, with about 40 people per meeting. The notable exception in the Year 3 Work Plan is the sub-grant to THP to work at the community level on issues of political violence.

While the team understands that the CEPPS mechanism brings considerable capacities to the BESA project, it does not follow that these capacities can be delivered only through three separate country offices, versus a single office that creatively leverages and manages the contributions from the CEPPS partners. In fact, with the shift towards the advocacy strategy in Year 3, there are signs that the existing structure has impeded the effective implementation of the strategy, with each of the partners working in relative isolation with their respective groups, and a weak effort at a common "platform."

**Component 1: In the current political context, is promoting electoral reform in campaign finance (and in other electoral reform topics) still relevant and feasible? In light of the challenges in working with the GOB and ECB in particular, what other approaches should USAID consider in follow-on projects?**

## **FINDINGS**

Although the GOB attempted to revise political spending and requirements for the disclosure of campaign spending, new provisions in the law have not been honored, with no enforcement by the ECB. In developing the BESA program, it was believed that there would be a collaborative process with the ECB to strengthen their capacity to audit candidate filings. To this end, CEPPS engaged in discussions with the Chief Election Commissioner on international best practices for campaign finance monitoring, a political finance assessment was conducted during Year 1, and two FGDs were held with CSOs and media monitoring groups to explore knowledge of campaign finance in Bangladesh.

The first Quarterly Report in 2013 states that the ECB was cautious in promising to engage in activities outlined in the political finance assessment during the pre-election period. However, they expressed enthusiasm in a desire to see improvements. The assessment and recommendations were provided to the ECB during the fourth quarter of FY 2013 reporting period. In addition, BRIDGE training on political finance was set for the ECB staff and other electoral stakeholders. By the end of Year 1, however, no action was taken by the ECB toward improving campaign finance auditing or establishing a political finance wing in the agency. In the last quarter of FY 2014, CEPPS indicated there was hesitancy on the part of the ECB to proceed with the political finance recommendations; however, discussions continued.

In Year 2, IFES began to work towards a new strategy in the area of campaign finance monitoring, agreeing with Shushanar Janniya Nagorik (Shujan) and TIB to create an Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group. IFES also reached an agreement with Shujan to create an on-line, searchable database of campaign spending disclosure forms. That work continued through Year 3, and is close to completion. In Year 2, IRI began its work with CSOs in the area of campaign finance monitoring, holding FGDs with seven CSOs, some of them involved in the election observation activities supported by NDI: Women's Democracy Network, Brotee, Shujan, Mass-line Media Centre, Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI), JANIPOP, and Democracy Watch attended. These were the basis for a media monitoring RFP and an eventual contract with MRDI. IRI began training five partner CSOs on monitoring of campaign spending.

There are several observations that can be made about the work on campaign finance done by BESA. First, BESA has interacted with a very narrow range of CSOs—seven in total. In particular, it has not involved the EWG, which has both member capacity for conducting monitoring and important advocacy activities. Again, this raises questions about the use of local systems. The EWG has not been involved in the Year 3 activities, whether the Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group or the advocacy initiatives around Ek Bangladesh or the Policy Breakfasts. Second, the campaign finance observation carried out by IRI's partner CSOs was completed in Year 2, but without any follow-on activity in Year 3. IRI's efforts in this area is not integrated into the BESA advocacy effort in the area of campaign finance. Third, on a related point, BESA missed an opportunity to use the IRI sub-grants to support research to deepen knowledge of this issue (this will be discussed below in the findings on Component 2).

With respect to the shift towards advocacy in the Year 3 Work Plan, it should be noted that it was approved by USAID in February 2015, with only ten months of the program remaining, including close out. Moreover, as discussed above, the level of resources allocated to BESA's advocacy strategy are small in the Bangladesh context. The components of this refocused BESA program in Year 3 included the establishment of several small formal and informal working groups, which would meet on a regular basis to discuss specific issues; the Policy Breakfasts with different stakeholders; and the establishment of a website, 'Ek Bangladesh,' to increase visibility of electoral reform issues among youth audiences.

Participants interviewed by the team indicate that the small working groups and policy breakfasts present a good forum to discuss electoral matters, but are unsure about where this goes.

The team did not see a detailed design for the communications and messaging components of the proposed advocacy strategy. It is not clear how the election reform issues will be framed. How will “demand” be expressed concretely? Does this entail a public critique of the current practices of the political parties? If so, who are the priority audiences other than the political parties? Beyond the narrow circle of the BESA advisory groups, there does not appear to be a plan to articulate a broader initiative to promote CSO dialogue and engagement. Would the national leadership of the political parties be willing to engage CSOs on this topic? The BESA Year 3 Work Plan is silent on these issues.

## CONCLUSIONS

In establishing BESA, critical assumptions were made concerning interest and support from the GOB and the ECB in the areas of electoral reform, which seemed to be reasonable in 2012. Unfortunately, due to changing political conditions, these assumptions did not translate into a program of mutual cooperation. The redesigned BESA also contains assumptions, which have yet to be confirmed and, therefore, provide uncertainty as to the success of this new approach based on partnerships with CSOs. With respect to ‘Ek Bangladesh,’ the team considers that it would need significant improvements to attract an audience. More importantly, a successful strategy would have to go beyond the narrow range of CSOs involved in Years 1 and 2, including engagement with the EWG.

While the Year 3 Work Plan was based on a new set of “critical assumptions,” it is not clear to the team that these are the most important assumptions. The BESA concept paper does not mention at all public opinion about elections reform generally, or campaign finance reform more specifically. Who supports electoral reform? Is it high on the public’s list of policy priorities? IRI’s own surveys say not. Despite BESA’s considerable polling capacity, they did not further conduct public opinion research to inform the Year 3 advocacy strategies. The research conducted by BESA sub-grantees in Years 1 and 2, and finalized in Year 3, will not generate evidence-based inputs for the advocacy on campaign finance.

More generally, the team does not see a clearly articulated advocacy strategy beyond the advisory groups. The team notes that USAID/Bangladesh and other donors supported advocacy efforts in other areas of DRG since 2009 (e.g. in decentralization and local governance; transparency and accountability; justice sector reform; civil service reform; etc.), which have run aground on GOB indifference to the advocacy efforts of CSOs.<sup>29</sup> It is not clear how a small-scale advocacy campaign based on informal deliberations among small CSO working groups, without a unified messaging and few resources for dissemination, would be successful in changing the position of the GOB, ECB, and the political parties.

One additional issue that came out of the interviews with members of the “next generation leaders” group was the lack of understanding about the advocacy strategy, their role in that strategy, and what will be the follow on activities that will create the “platform” envisioned by the Year 3 Work Plan. Even the CEO of NDI’s main partner in “EK Bangladesh,” interviewed by the team, could not articulate an action plan beyond continuing with the Policy Breakfasts with funding from other donors. The team did not see ownership on the part of these leaders. Success in any follow-on activity in the area of campaign finance would have to correct this major deficiency.

### **Component 2: How effective was BESA in strengthening domestic elections monitoring through partnerships with local NGOs? What alternative strategy could be taken for**

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<sup>29</sup> See the performance evaluations of the SDLG, and the Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity projects, conducted by the Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs’ Evaluations team. Also, the Bangladesh DRG Assessment, which cites the difficulties faced by other donors in supporting governance reforms since 2009.

## **follow-on projects in strengthening domestic election monitoring? How effective was BESA in strengthening local NGOs and media in conducting research? (IRI)**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Domestic Elections Monitoring:**

All of the CEPPS' IPs had previous work experience in Bangladesh prior to the BESA program. In 1995, USAID funded a program with IFES to provide technical assistance and commodities support to the ECB and the ETI. In 2003, USAID awarded a political party reform program under CEPPS to IRI and NDI. This program was originally scheduled to conclude shortly after the anticipated 2007 elections. Through BESA, CEPPS' IPs sought to strengthen local CSOs by improving their election observation strategy, deployment, and reporting. In Year 1 of the program, election assessments were conducted to review Bangladesh's electoral processes and meet with domestic observers, civil society leaders, the ECB, media representatives, and other electoral stakeholders. Following the initial assessment, BESA opted to provide election training on Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen's Organizations to 180 people from 26 selected CSOs (see summary table of BESA training in Annex VII). BESA eventually partnered with five CSOs: the Jaago Foundation, PRIP Trust, Brotee, TMSS, and BNPS, only one of which (Brotee) had prior observation experience. As discussed above, BESA did not engage the EWG, a 29-member national coalition of CSOs established in 2006 and arguably the most important election monitoring group in the country.

By the middle of Year 1, BESA determined it would not be able to meet its quantitative targets in election monitoring training. Originally, NDI anticipated training 1,000 Master/Regional Trainers to serve as regional coordinators, who would train up to 15,000 domestic observers. NDI told the team that it did not have sufficient budget resources to support this scale of observation. Despite the ongoing political violence, NDI conducted a series of trainings throughout the latter part of 2013: Media and Communication (18 people); Election Observation Management (12); Election Observation for Non-traditional Actors (30); Election Observation for Physically Challenged Citizens (55); Master Trainers Training (100); and Master Trainers Training for EWG and Independent Observers (12). However, owing to the sustained political violence during 2013, NDI, following guidance from USAID, opted not to continue with the election observation activity for the 2014 Parliamentary elections.

As discussed in previous sections of this report, NDI did move forward with support for observation of the 2014 upazila elections, but at a much smaller scale than envisioned for the Parliamentary elections. NDI supported a Refresher Training for Master Trainers (25 people) from five of the partner EMOs, who went on to field 950 observers. Frequent meetings were held with the partners, including discussions on election observation methodologies, preparing Election Day checklists, and technical assistance in reporting. However, reports prepared by monitoring groups that had partnered with BESA did not meet the standards set by the IPs, indicating that further capacity building support was necessary. BESA was unsuccessful in attempts to engage the ECB in dialogue with CSOs on the observer guidelines.

#### **Campaign Finance Monitoring Network:**

The Campaign Finance Monitoring Network (CFMN) was established by IRI following the January 2014 election with the same five CSOs that had worked with NDI on election observation: the Jaago Foundation, PRIP Trust, Brotee, TMSS, and BNPS. Trained observers were to be fielded to take note of campaign materials, events, assess costs, and compare estimated costs against official campaign finance filings. There were 15 participants (11 males and four females) from the five CSOs who participated in the master training. They, in turn, trained 100 volunteer monitors (87 males and 13 females) to monitor the upazila elections. Training participants interviewed by the team stated that the CFMN training used examples from the Philippines, which was confusing and reduced its effectiveness. Others found the monitoring methodology too complex.

BESA's upazila campaign finance monitoring covered 10 of 480 upazilas. From these 10 targeted upazilas 3,080 observations were provided to BESA following the conclusion of the elections. IRI uncovered numerous inconsistencies and data irregularities that led to concerns about the monitoring data's overall quality and reliability. According to interviews with IRI, no final report other than a 'lessons learned' internal document was published due to these errors. IRI itself gave poor marks to the entire BESA CFMN effort in a recent M&E document, citing "the prohibitively low capacity of the CSOs," and lamenting the "dearth of public of public demand for reliable campaign finance information."<sup>30</sup>

### **Media Training on Campaign Finance Reporting:**

BESA partnered with MRDI to conduct trainings with print and television journalists on campaign finance reporting. The trainings took place in April 2014, with 48 participants (43 males and five females) representing 16 media houses. The purpose of the training was to develop the capacity and report writing skills of reporters on campaign finance and to cultivate more interest in this area. The team did not see evidence from BESA reports that the training produced more or better reporting on campaign finance. No follow up monitoring was carried out by BESA or MRDI; nor have they contributed to further advocacy work within the Year 3 activities.

### **Research Training Academy:**

The Research Training Academy (RTA) provided an opportunity for representatives from eleven CSOs to learn about research methodology.<sup>31</sup> There were four training modules, each one building on the knowledge gained from the previous module. At the end of the four sessions, participants were to have a solid understanding of research and would be able to conduct their own programs. This activity was not launched in Year 2, more than a year after BESA was awarded.

The team interviewed four participants to ask about the quality and relevance of the training delivered by IRI. The interviewees said that an eight-day package delivered in four phases over a period of 10 months is too long. As one training participant said, "when I appeared in the third session I was about to forget what I learned in the first session, but they are interconnected." According to the interviewee, although training participation overall remained about the same over the eight months, the participants rotated, thus losing continuity in training results. Another participant mentioned that data and examples were shown from United States poll data, which most of the participants could not relate to under the local context. All four participants thought that the training could have been done by Bangladeshis, as the contents were quite elementary.

IRI has planned another round of training through the RTA approach. The BESA Quarterly Report for FY 2015, Quarter 3, mentions that the training will be attended by 30 people from eighteen CSOs.<sup>32</sup> A review of the participating CSOs suggests that few of them have the experience or capacity to conduct research or carry on a sustained program after the training (TIB is a notable exception). This is because most of these CSOs are multi-sector development organizations that receive donor funding in a broad range of activities, although mostly specialized in DRG issues. The interviews with three of the four participants in the first round of the RTA indicate that they do not expect to use the training in their

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<sup>30</sup> BESA 2015 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, p.10.

<sup>31</sup> These are: JANIPOP, JAAGO Foundation, Brotee, Transparency International Bangladesh, DFID, Jagorani Chakra Foundation, Democracy Watch, Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre, Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha, Management and Resources Development Initiative and Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha.

<sup>32</sup> JANIPOP, JAAGO Foundation, Brotee, Transparency International Bangladesh, DFID, Jagorani Chakra Foundation, Democracy Watch, Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre, Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha, Management and Resources Development Initiative, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha, Institute of Informatics and Development, LightCastle Partners, Portonics Ltd., BFPSS, Steps Toward Development, Bangladesh Foundation for Strategic Studies and Development Wheel.

work.

### **Long Term Elections Studies:**

Sub grants for four research papers were awarded in late 2013 to Team Alternatives, JANIPOP, Eminence, and Dr. Manzurul Manan. JANIPOP (in English, National Election Observation Council) is an elections observation CSO, with no apparent expertise in social research. Team Alternatives is a market consultancy firm, with three years of experience, focusing on business consultancies. “Eminence Associates for Social Development” (Eminence) is a development consultancy, carrying out a range of program assessments, designs, and other research for institutional clients in health, nutrition, and food security, environment, climate change, water-sanitation, poverty reduction, governance, and urbanization. Most of Eminence’s work has been outside of the governance area. Dr. Manan is an Associate Professor for Independent University’s Department of Social Science and Humanities (IU-DSSH), Bangladesh.<sup>33</sup>

While IRI explained that the RFA focused on CSOs, one of the grants went towards a full-time university faculty member. Thus, it can be assumed that the concept of CSOs did not exclude universities. However, none of the major social science faculties in Bangladesh (which have entire departments and professors in political science) were selected. The team notes that, on the face of it, the selection of JANIPOP, Eminence, and Team Alternatives contradicts the statement in the BESA agreement that the selection of the CSOs would be “based on the particular organization’s expertise.”<sup>34</sup> From their institutional profiles, none of these three CSOs can be said to have significant expertise in conducting basic research on governance and electoral topics.

Only one of the four sub-grantees selected by IRI to conduct research on electoral issues, IU-DSSH, has a specific focus, institutional experience, and full time staff with expertise in conducting social research in areas relevant to the BESA electoral reform issues. Even so, IU-DSSH is a relatively weak academic institution in the Bangladesh context; the Department consists of only nine fulltime professors and lecturers. This can be contrasted with other universities in Bangladesh with social science faculties. The team collected information on three other major university social science faculties, as follows:

- Jahangirnagar University, Faculty of Social Sciences. **35 fulltime faculty**
- BRAC University Department of Economic and Social Sciences. **36 fulltime faculty**
- Dhaka University, Faculty of Social Science. **246 fulltime faculty**

The research title of Team Alternatives is ‘Social Media and Generation Y Voters.’ It researches how social media has altered the way political parties and leaders connect with their voters and manage party dynamics. JANIPOP’s research is on ‘Barriers to Political and Electoral Participation for Persons with Disabilities.’ The Eminence research is titled ‘Who Gets Nominated and Why: An Analysis of Political Recruitment.’ This research project is to identify voters’ perception on the criteria of a good candidate. Dr. Manzurul Manan’s research is titled ‘Bangladesh Democracy: Political Impediments and Structural

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<sup>33</sup> See profile in the JANIPOP website: [http://janipop.org/?page\\_id=63](http://janipop.org/?page_id=63). Team Alternatives’ principle partners describe themselves as following: “Four sophomores from the Institute of Business Administration at Dhaka University started this venture in 2012. Initially starting as a promotion strategy developer for one real estate company, Team Alternatives started developing grant proposals, feasibility reports, and business cases for both local and international clients from this year. See profile in New Age, <http://old-archives.newagebd.net/detail.php?date=2013-10-26&nid=70434#.VmGBcHYrLIU>. The Eminence profile can be found here: <http://www.eminence-bd.org/index.php/about-us/what-we-do/program>. See Dr. Manan’s profile in: <http://slass.iub.edu.bd/socialscience/index.php/faculty/166.html>

<sup>34</sup> BESA Cooperative Agreement, Program Description, p. 45.

Imperatives.’ Contrary to IRI’s stated intention to link the surveys with the research conducted by the sub-grantees, a review of the summary reports shows that none of the projects uses IRI survey data.

## CONCLUSIONS

BESA’s support to five partner CSOs in both election monitoring and campaign finance monitoring did not bring them up to the proposed standards. As a result, the reports in both of these areas were not broadly disseminated to other EMOs. It is not clear to the team what, exactly, the “impact model” was behind the election observation and campaign finance monitoring. NDI claimed that it was promoting quality, i.e., use of international standards and best practices, rather than quantity. As discussed above, BESA’s training reached few people and did not reach the anticipated numbers of observers, monitors, and/or Master Trainers. Yet, if BESA does not engage with other EMOs to analyze the challenges in applying more rigorous approaches, what will it have achieved beyond the group of five partner EMOs? The failure to involve the EWG was a major factor in the limited reach of BESA’s election monitoring activities and should be corrected in any follow-on activity to BESA.

The research papers were to be released in October 2014, but were released as policy briefs on the ‘Ek Bangladesh’ website in September 2015, a few months before close-out. More importantly, the delays reflect the deficient sub-grantee selection process, which did not select experienced organizations or consider sustainability—i.e., whether the CSOs and staff would continue to produce research on electoral issues. Looking at their institutional profiles, the team doubts that they will. It is not possible to incentivize CSO program staff to create a “comprehensive body” of research on election issues in organizations that have no institutional vocation or dedicated research staff to do research.

This component of BESA makes little sense from the point of view of institutional and human capacity development approaches. There are numerous university faculties and independent think tanks which have a clear vocation and expertise in the field of DRG and related topics. Any further support for research around elections should prioritize building their capacity, supporting professional researchers, university professors, and graduate students to use public opinion survey data and apply it to analysis of elections. This is something that the four research projects supported by IRI failed to do. The validity of these observations is confirmed in by the enormous difficulties IRI encountered in getting the sub-grantees to produce an acceptable quality of research products and in an opportune time frame.

The research training provided through RTA was appreciated by the participants. However, they observed that the modality of delivery took away from its potential impact, as participants lost continuity in learning results and it generated rotation in training participants. The selection of “development CSOs” without a clear vocation for research means that many of the participants will probably not apply what they learned in their current organization. The question of the program’s focus on CSOs carries over to the research grants: only one of the grantee organizations has experience in social research.

**Component 3: How effective was BESA in addressing election violence and security issues? What challenges did BESA face in this component and how did the project respond? What other approaches BESA/USAID can think of while engaging with GOB on sensitive issues such as election violence and security? How successful was the partnership between PAVE and DPR fellowship program in addressing election violence?**

## FINDINGS

Election-related violence is prevalent in Bangladesh. BESA sought to improve the capacity of the ECB to address electoral violence by conducting an EDR assessment survey during Year I of BESA. In addition, security trainings and conflict mitigation workshops were conducted in coordination with the ETI and UNDP. Civil society representatives, ECB staff, and donors participated. The EDR assessment as well as

recommendations on electoral violence and dispute resolution were provided to the ECB, but it did not engage in any meaningful way in the discussion of BESAS' electoral security recommendations.

Unable to partner with Odhikar, a CSO with experience in monitoring electoral violence, IFES moved to implement this activity through the development of PAVE, a community level program developed to address violence through volunteer "peace ambassadors." It is designed to develop the volunteers' knowledge and skills in conflict resolution. IFES took an inductive approach, developing the PAVE concept and piloting it on a small scale. The PAVE trainings started with the DPR fellows program and continued through Year 2 (see Annex X for PAVE training during the pilot phase). In Year 3, on the basis of positive pre and post-training self-evaluations of PAVE participants, BESA subcontracted with THP to work with their own country-wide network of volunteers to conduct the PAVE activity.

Between February and June of 2015, the training was carried out in 28 upazilas across 18 districts in four divisions. A total of 560 community members were trained (174 females and 386 males). The table in Annex X shows the professions/occupations of PAVE trainees. Of the 560 trainees, 231 are either party officials or elected representatives, which reflects PAVE's interest in mitigating inter-party violence. From the FGD conducted with PAVE trainees, it is apparent that the participating party officials are not senior leaders (i.e., the party Presidents, Secretaries, MPs, upazila Council Chairs) at the upazila and district levels. It is not evident what capacity these lower level activists and officials engaged by PAVE will have to convince senior party leadership to take action on issues to do with inter (or intra) party violence.

The team notes that an evaluation conducted by BDGPE of the Leadership Development Program found that for this kind of community level programs using youth volunteers, support for follow up activities and mentoring by program staff is needed over a several year period.<sup>35</sup> The sub-agreement with THP, however, does not provide support for follow-up activities or funding of community based events. BESA acknowledged that support received from THP for arranging the activities at the local level was significant and assumes the extensive THP network throughout the country, and strong grassroots base, will ensure easy access and acceptance for the PAVE initiatives.

This initiative, while successful in engaging local party officials and elected representatives, has yet to demonstrate results. While CEPPS has provided the team with M&E information on PAVE, the methodology is based on self-evaluation testing before and after training, and also self-evaluation from FGDs held with program participants. BDGPE's experience in using qualitative methods suggests that the potential for bias is very high, as evidenced by the high scores the training participants award themselves.<sup>36</sup> It is not clear whether other, more rigorous M&E methods will be used to determine the impact of this program. In interviews with the team, THP acknowledged that even ensuring timely reporting of the events is a challenge, given the lack of funds for M&E.

## CONCLUSIONS

When it became apparent in Year 1 that the ECB was not interested in formally participating in any programs relating to electoral violence or security, BESA refocused its activities towards civil society actors. Despite the loss of its CSO partner, Odhikar, IFES was able to develop its own approach based on its experience with women activists in the WAVE groups. IFES showed ingenuity and patience in developing and testing the PAVE concept and tools. There is ample social research in Bangladesh that

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<sup>35</sup> William Cartier, A.K.M. Saifullah, Kazi Maruf and Naim Mostafa, Mid-term Performance Evaluation of the Leadership Development Program. Dhaka: USAID/Social Impact. See pp. 19-21.

<sup>36</sup> IFES makes the point that scores actually dropped as some participants realized that they knew less than what they had initially assumed. Nevertheless, the average scores continue to be high (>70 per cent). The team does not consider them conclusive in assessing the impact of PAVE.

shows that local political conflicts are imbricated within complex familial, social, economic, and political structures, characterized by increased intersection of politics, business interests, and organized crime. In the absence of GOB interest in addressing this issue of election violence, the team recognizes that engaging community activists may seem to be the only viable strategy for programming by creating broader community involvement in prevention of political/electoral violence.

Yet, the team has doubts about how effective non-elite activists and leaders will be in this endeavor. This approach to conflict prevention may be viable, however it is premature to conclude whether it will succeed. While it is intuitively appealing, it is not clear that THP demonstrated success with this kind of approach at the community level. PAVE appears to be an experimental program, with a small reach. Most importantly, the team did not see evidence of a rigorous M&E activity that might provide data on the effectiveness of this alternative approach. BESA has not developed baseline measures on electoral violence, established a control in other non-PAVE localities, tracked incidents of violence in treatment and control localities, etc. IFES might consider a robust qualitative approach, using ethnographic methods, to monitor particular cases, and document how the program affects conflict dynamics. Without a robust evaluation, it is not possible to reach a determination about its impacts.

The last observation about PAVE has to do with its relation to the overall program strategy for promoting electoral policy reform. In principle, one might imagine that PAVE would be a good fit with the EK Bangladesh strategy, in that it offers a potential base for involving non-elite actors in the advocacy activities, complementing activities with CSOs (EWG and others) and the other elite policy debates in the BESA advisory groups and the Policy Breakfasts. But there is no evidence that BESA has been attempting to build this link, at least from the information reviewed by the team. That, in the final analysis, is the major weakness of PAVE and the other Year 3 activities—i.e., the lack of coordination among the BESA partners to create a unified, structured advocacy and outreach effort with a common “platform,” messaging, communications channels, and coordinated activities in support of reform. Without that, and even taking into consideration the merits of individual program activities like PAVE, the overall program approach in Year 3 does not appear to be more than the sum of its parts.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. USAID should assess whether it is practical to fund newly designed programs with a shift towards civil society advocacy and community based activism to promote electoral reforms. In the medium term, while the ECB is not likely to be more receptive than it has in the last three years, it is not clear that there is an opportunity for successful work in this area. One critical assumption is that the GOB and the ECB will respond positively to advocacy efforts or community mobilization coming from CSOs at a time when the GOB is actively trying to close spaces for CSO involvement in policy.
2. If USAID were to support a shift to a “demand side” approach to electoral reform, it should require the selected IPs to develop comprehensive, evidence-based advocacy and communications strategies. These strategies should be based on broad coalitions of CSOs and civil society leaders, with ownership and understanding of the objectives and strategies, rather than informal working groups with two or three CSOs convened from time to time by the IPs. They should be informed by polling and relevant research that contributes directly to the strategy design, messaging, communications, and media strategies and supported with adequate budget resources.
3. A decision to fund a new program with a consortium (whether CEPPS or other IPs) should consider an operational structure with a single office and one expat COP (and DCOP if appropriate). At the level of funding envisioned within the USAID/Bangladesh DRG portfolio, this will provide adequate management. Any consortium of IPs should be required to provide innovative and cost-effective program approaches and implementation strategies, using their international experts for short term technical assistance rather than as resident directors (COPs) and relying on local partners. Close attention should be paid to ensuring adequate budget resources for larger scale program activities, whether training, outreach, communications, or community activism.
4. Related to the previous recommendation, in looking at options, USAID should consider focusing any work on campaign finance to give priority of place to engagement with the political parties. Without bringing in political party leaders, it is hard to imagine success in advocacy efforts. This could be done by incorporating campaign finance into any program with political parties after the completion of the DPR project. While it seems doubtful in the current political context that AL would participate sincerely in such an effort, the opposition parties may find this topic more appealing.
5. A more efficient office configuration and reduced operating costs would free up budget resources for training, technical assistance, and subcontracting. If a newly designed program were to focus on civil society advocacy and community activism, a large budget share should go to support the work of local IPs, through contracts and sub-grants. This should be accompanied by efforts to ensure stakeholder buy-in and leadership. USAID should look at other civil society advocacy “platforms” in Bangladesh to identify lessons and recommendations for designing a broad-based initiative.
6. The strategy developed by THP to support community-based PAVE activities should be carefully evaluated before any decision to fund a large scale program of this sort. Attention should be placed on issues such as the selection of community activists, their standing in the community, and their ability to convene other institutional actors (in particular senior leaders of political parties). M&E approaches should be improved to measure how the program contributes to changing dynamics of political violence locally. It should be incorporated within the messaging and communications strategies of the broader program, not as a “community” activity isolated from the advocacy.
7. If USAID were to consider more activities in support of election observation, they should consider allocating more resources into the work of the EWG, whether within the framework of a new electoral reform project of the sort discussed here, or directly through a small “USAID Forward” mechanism to support the activities of the CSOs working within the EWG. Working within the

EWG framework would be a cost-effective way of reaching a large scale quickly, and would also allow USAID to stay engaged in election reform issues before the next election through the EWG.

8. If USAID is committed to building capacity for producing robust electoral research using quantitative methods, it should consider partnerships with local think tanks or university social science faculties to promote research programs. This could be done within the framework of the Asia Barometer (similar to USAID support to the Latin American Public Opinion Project initiative) to continue frequent surveying to produce relevant studies around elections, but also using survey instruments designed in function of research into broader determinants of political behavior, voting, abstention, protest, etc.

# LESSONS LEARNED

1. Electoral support programs are subject to changing political environments and vulnerable to broad political dynamics, consensus on application of constitutional and legal provisions, patterns of political competition, inter-party violence, autonomy of elections commissions, and other external factors. USAID should make realistic assessments of the autonomy and commitment to engage on the part of elections commissions and be prepared to make decisions about program focus, budgets, etc., reducing or ending program support when appropriate.
2. While elections support projects are one way of ensuring engagement with government counterparts, this in and of itself is not a compelling argument to maintain a failing program. In cases like BESA, in which the critical assumptions of the project have collapsed entirely, USAID and United States government should explore other options for engagement, which will provide more value for money. Multi-year, large scale projects might well generate operational costs far beyond the possible utility of occasional encounters with a recalcitrant government counterpart. In such cases, the Mission should consider other strategies for engagement that do not require project funding.
3. A failure on the part of government agencies to engage in electoral reform is not *prima facie* evidence that a turn to civil society advocacy strategies will be a more effective way of promoting reform. Civil society strategies are more complex and challenging than capacity development activities. They require the ability to identify, convene, and promote leadership and ownership of multiple CSO counterparts in a much broader ambit of action, with more intervening variables. There are many examples of failed CSO policy advocacy in Bangladesh and other developing countries. Avoiding their fate requires careful assessment and program design.
4. Promoting and sustaining community activism at the community level and measuring its impacts is especially challenging, requiring a deep understanding of local social structure and power relations. In the case of Bangladesh, recent social research shows the elitist and hierarchical nature of local political structures, their links to powerful family and business interests, and the increasingly violent nature of politics hinged on local strongmen and quasi-criminal elements. In this context, a strong local partner is essential for promoting community activism to prevent and mitigate political violence. Even so, in this setting, demonstrating the impacts of intervention require careful approaches to evaluation, not necessarily quantitative but, rather, using robust ethnographic methods.
5. Supporting social science research on elections related topics is a complex endeavor. Countries like Bangladesh have large contingents of CSOs, which are “omnivorous” in their grant-seeking, and will reply to research RFPs, often without having the experience and capacity to undertake rigorous research. To generate robust research projects, USAID needs to focus on building the capacity of institutions with the vocation, experience, and staffing that will provide experienced researchers with opportunities to carry out original, quantitative studies using data produced by USAID elections programs. Most research institutions do not have the resources to conduct their own surveys. USAID’s elections surveys can provide data sets that adds value to these institutions’ existing institutional and human capacity, and advances social science understanding of elections topics.

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I: EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

### Scope of Work for the Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA) External Final Performance Evaluation USAID/Bangladesh Office of Democracy and Governance

#### Program Identification Data

Program Title	: Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA)
Program Number	: AID-388-LA-13-00001
Program Dates	: January 16, 2013 – January 15, 2016
Program Funding	: \$8,000,000
Implementing Organization	: Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS); Consortium partners: (i) International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), (ii) National Democratic Institute (NDI), and (iii) International Republican Institute (IRI)
Agreement Officer Technical Representative (AOR)	: Rejwana Farha
Evaluation Period	: August to October, 2015

#### I. Background

Since independence in 1971, Bangladesh has endured a series of political rupture that have hindered the emergence of stable institutions of democratic governance. Despite a sustained period of democratic governance from 1991-2007, a defining dynamic of politics under both Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) governments has been a high-stakes, winner-take-all approach that shaped negatively relations between the government and opposition, leading to opposition walkouts and boycotts of Parliament, in addition to often violent opposition-sponsored general strikes (hartals) aimed at forcing concessions from the government.

After the 2007-2008 military-backed caretaker government, this violent partisan confrontation has continued, with an opposition boycott of Parliament following the 2008 elections; then a period of general strikes in late 2013 in response to the government decision to dispense with the mechanism of the caretaker government; a subsequent opposition boycott of the 2014 Parliamentary elections; and finally, a country-wide road blockade in early 2015 involving a campaign of arson attacks against transport. Meanwhile, opposition leaders have also been targeted through false charges, arrests and mass jailing of party leaders, custodial mistreatment and death, and disappearances.

Despite the ongoing partisan conflicts, the 2008 Parliamentary elections appeared to prove that formal institutions such as the ECB and standardized electoral processes could govern a democratic political transition of power in Bangladesh; that political parties could garner the support of a disillusioned populace; and that the act of voting could effectively channel citizen will. Positive aspects of these elections included voter turnout of over 86 percent, and a strong role civil society organizations, partly through a nationwide domestic election monitoring effort spearheaded by the EWG comprising 32 civil society organizations.

The Parliamentary elections held in January, 2014 were critical for Bangladesh in determining whether the country continues on a path to sustainable democratic development. However, these elections were

boycotted by opposition political parties, including the BNP led alliance; as result, more than 50% of the Members of Parliament (MPs) were elected unopposed. As mentioned, the response of the BNP was to intensify protests, through a violent road blockade. The opposition in the Parliament today is a supine Jatiyo Party (JI) which had been convinced by the AL to run electoral candidates through a combination of coercion and inducements, including offers of uncontested seats.

Since the 2014 Parliamentary elections, there have been two sub-national elections (for Upazila Chairs and Vice-Chairs and Mayors and Councils of city corporations), both of which have been marred by fraud, vote buying, violence, and intimidation. The ECB's role has been ambiguous at best, as the elections authority has turned a blind eye to the many documented irregularities, stating that the irregularities were few and have been magnified by the opposition and partisan media, declaring both elections to be free and fair. This ostensibly political bias of the ECB in these elections has undermined the credibility of the election results and fomented continued instability and partisan conflict.

### **Development Hypothesis:**

USAID/B's stated development hypothesis is that "support for increased citizen engagement and improved governance will generate increased demand for democratic practices and better services, which in turn, will culminate in improved accountability and responsiveness to citizen needs, thereby increasing citizen confidence in governance institutions.<sup>37</sup>"

CEPPS' program subscribes to this overarching development hypothesis. In addition, CEPPS has developed the follow development hypotheses for the individual programmatic areas:

### **Increased compliance with campaign finance laws**

IFES. The ECB lacks the human resources and technical capacity to effectively assess campaign finance filings from political parties and candidates, impose sanctions, and keep the public informed on financial reporting. As a result, there is an absence of enforcement of campaign finance regulations. If the ECB can increase their understanding of international best practices pertaining to campaign finance, assume responsibility for the audit of disclosure forms, and train staff to assess these documents, then they will be able to detect when parties and candidates are not compliant with rules and regulations pertaining to campaign expenditure. This will lead to increased enforcement and sanctions. If the ECB works with political parties and other electoral stakeholders to ensure that there is an understanding of campaign finance regulations, then there will be a higher likelihood that these regulations will be followed.

IRI. Although campaign finance regulations exist, steps are rarely taken to hold violators accountable, thus contributing to a campaign environment that is generally lacking in credibility and integrity, and one in which very few participants feel obligated to abide by the rules. Furthermore, election dynamics in Bangladesh are largely controlled by political party elites, and therefore the electorate is often left out of the decision-making process when it comes to campaign issues and other driving factors in the election process. Such concerns involving elite capture of the electoral process and a general dearth of accountability have called into question the integrity of Bangladesh's electoral framework, as well as the sustainability of its fledgling democracy. If Bangladeshi CSOs have the skills necessary to objectively assess and audit campaign finance filings, they will begin to credibly scrutinize whether the information contained therein is accurate and complete, in accordance with Bangladeshi law. Concurrently, if media monitoring

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<sup>37</sup> Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy FY 2011 - FY 2016 (September 2011), pg. 8

organizations and other civil society partners have the requisite skills and resources, they will provide meaningful analysis of the conditions, attitudes and relevant issues surrounding the 2014 elections.

### **Improved utility of long-term election monitoring**

IRI. Bangladeshi citizens lack a comprehensive body of knowledge detailing the conditions and attitudes surrounding their elections. If civil society is equipped with free and unbiased coverage of parties and candidates and the public has access to reliable quantitative and qualitative public opinion research, then the utility of long-term election monitoring will be improved through the creation of an informed and civically engaged populace.

NDI. If international election assessment teams assess electoral processes and challenges and support citizen election monitoring organizations' efforts (CEPPS IR 2.2.1); and citizen election monitoring organizations monitor and promote the implementation of observation findings and recommendations (CEPPS IR 2.2.2); and citizen election monitoring organizations, activists, international election monitoring experts, and other key stakeholders engage in efforts to support and deliver credible national elections in 2014 (CEPPS Objective 2.2); then the utility of long-term election monitoring will be improved (USAID Objective 2).

### **Reduced Prevalence of Election-related Violence**

IFES. Inadequate handling of election complaints has caused Bangladeshis to rely on violence as a means of voicing grievances. If procedure for electoral dispute resolution through legal channels is improved and community based groups engage in detection of violence as well as alternative methods of preventing violence, then electoral violence will decrease - political actors may have more confidence in the ability of established dispute resolution processes to address their grievances and may be less likely to resort to violence. Additionally, if the ECB coordinates with other security actors to address security during the election, then security actors will be able to more quickly respond to incidences of violence. Early response to violence will decrease the likelihood of violence escalating.

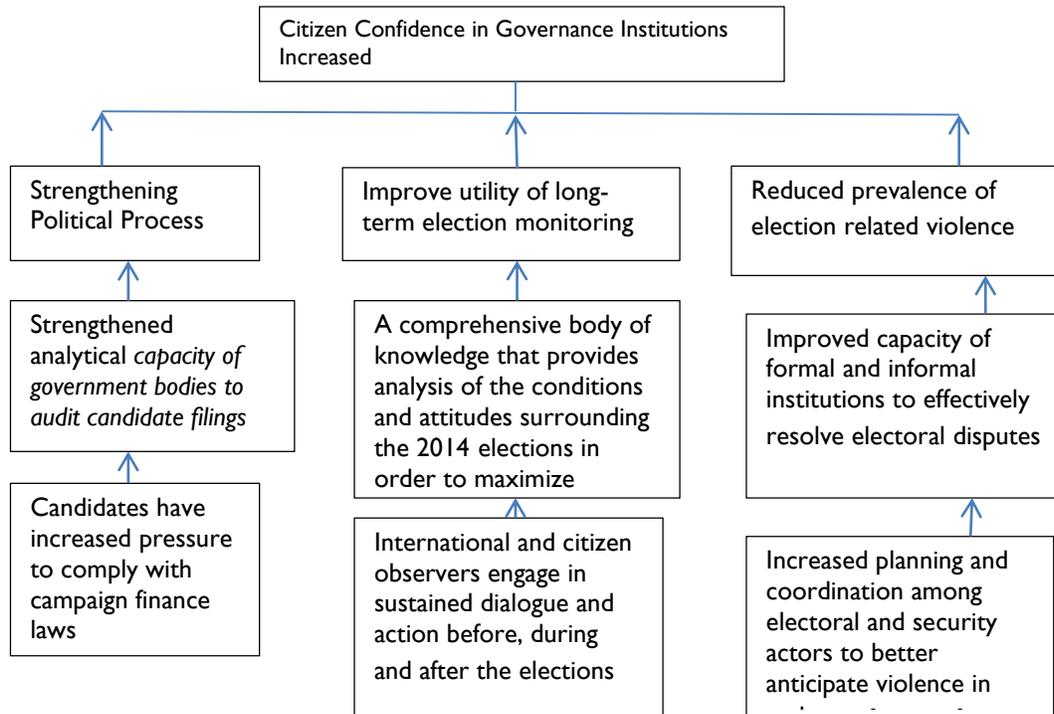
## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

To address the significant challenges to peaceful, credible and transparent parliamentary elections in Bangladesh in 2014, USAID funded a new program, the Bangladesh Elections Support Activities (BESA), whose implementing partner is the Consortium for Political Process and Elections Strengthening (CEPPS), with sub-partners: the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). The BESA program proposed to engage civil society, the media, political parties, and the Election Commission in programs designed to strengthen their capacity to monitor and deliver credible national elections in 2014, augmented by periodic independent international polling and assessment missions.

Following the parliamentary elections, CEPPS partners went on to propose additional activities designed to promote engagement with media, civil society and Election Commission on how to strengthen the integrity of the elections processes, looking at issues of campaign finance, mitigation of election-related violence, and ensuring meaningful monitoring of the electoral environment before, during, and after elections. This program also has supported policy analysis, oversight, and development of actionable recommendations for further strengthening the electoral framework and increasing participation in electoral processes.

To achieve the overall goal of strengthening the integrity of the elections processes, BESA project has worked towards achieving the following specific objectives:

Result Framework:



USAID/B IR 1.1: Strengthening Political Processes

**USAID/B Objective 1: Increased compliance with campaign finance laws**

CEPPS Objective 1.1 (IFES): Strengthened analytical capacity of government bodies to audit candidate filings.

- Result 1.1.1: Enhanced capacity of ECB to address campaign finance issues
- Result 1.1.2: ECB-led efforts to engage stakeholders in development of effective public disclosure procedures

Through Objective 1, IFES supports increased compliance with campaign finance laws. IFES is trying to strengthen the capacity of the ECB to engage government agencies such as the National Board of Revenue or the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General to assist in the auditing of disclosure forms as well as to be more proactive in the auditing of filings. Under Result 1.1.1, IFES strengthens the political process in Bangladesh by increasing the accountability of the ECB to review disclosure documentation and their capacity to do so. IFES supports the ECB in enhancing their understanding of campaign finance best practices in political finance regulations through trainings, and in engaging in legal reform. Additionally, under Result 1.1.2 IFES supports effective discourse between the ECB and other electoral stakeholders in the development of effective public disclosure procedures. The political process is being strengthened through increased compliance with campaign finance regulations due to increased knowledge and more effective procedures developed as a result of a consultative process. This collaborative process, in turn, should lead to enhanced citizens' confidence in the ECB. Confidence is also be aided by the ECB's

demonstrating greater ownership of their responsibility to audit campaign finance disclosure statements in order to ensure fair competition amongst candidates.

CEPPS Objective 1.2 (IRI): Candidates have increased pressure to comply with campaign finance laws.

- Result 1.2.1: Strengthened analytical capacity of civil society and media organizations to monitor and assess candidate campaign finance filings
- Result 1.2.1: The public, including voters and political stakeholders are better informed on candidate compliance with campaign finance laws

Although laws sanctioning the use of “black money” (improperly documented funds) exists, steps are rarely taken to punish those who violate campaign finance law; leading to an atmosphere of unaccountability in Bangladeshi politics and low confidence in governance institutions such as the ECB and political parties. According to the Political Party Registration Rules of 2008, registration of political parties shall be cancelled if they fail to submit electoral expense statements, or fail to comply with other registration preconditions. In practice however, the implementation of such sanctions, which largely fall under the purview of the ECB, is rarely observed.

Through cooperation with Bangladeshi Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and media organizations to develop the capacity of civil society to competently and credibly audit and critique candidate campaign finance filings, IRI provides voters in Bangladesh with alternative sources of reliable information, if they have the requisite skills and resources that will facilitate voters’ ability to gauge the accuracy of candidate campaign filings. As a result of this effort, the project intends the voters will also be better positioned to discern the general integrity of an important component of the electoral process. If the voters are better informed on candidate compliance with campaign finance laws and regulations, then it is expected that a reinforcing demand for greater accountability with regard to candidate campaign spending will follow, thus contributing to increased pressure for candidates to comply with campaign finance laws and regulations.

IRI works with a broad cohort of CSOs, polling firms and media monitoring organizations in Bangladesh. IRI supports the efforts of these groups through training seminars, individual consultations and the issuing of sub-grants to some of these groups. As a result of this effort, the project intends the voters will be provided with information and analysis on political party and candidate campaign finance filings, electoral reports covering topics relevant to the clean, fair and free conduct of elections in Bangladesh and independent public opinion research that effectively and accurately gauges public opinion.

Through a series of training sessions and sub grants, program outputs include an increased knowledge base among CSOs on the subject of campaign finance and process of filing auditing. Additional program outputs include published electoral reports and independent polling results. Program outcomes include the development of a network of CSOs capable of furnishing objective and reliable campaign filing audits and the creation of a substantive and publically accessible body of knowledge that informs voters of the dynamics and attitudes surrounding the electoral framework. Impacts will depend on other mitigating factors, but by helping CSOs, media monitoring groups and polling firms to produce credible campaign filing audits, objective electoral studies and verifiable public opinion polling results, the program is aiming to promote the development of a more transparent and credible political environment that is checked by civil society-driven oversight.

## **USAID/B Objective 2: Improve utility of long-term election monitoring**

CEPPS Objective 2.1 (IRI): A comprehensive body of knowledge that provides analysis of the conditions and attitudes surrounding the 2014 elections in order to maximize understanding of election dynamics among electoral stakeholders is created

- Result 2.1.1: Election monitoring, reporting and analysis improved by increasing the amount of objective and reliable information on election issues
- Result 2.1.2: Election results independently verified

Several major factors have contributed to the growing need for governance and civil society institutions in Bangladesh to improve their capacity to more effectively fulfill their roles of monitoring elections and strengthening political processes. In Bangladesh, elections are largely controlled by political party elites, and therefore the electorate often questions the transparency of the institutions involved and the fairness of the campaign process itself. Moreover, election outcomes have consistently been marred by controversy over the accuracy of results. The election outcome in Bangladesh from the 2014 elections is likely to be the subject of controversy. Regardless of the outcome of the elections, supporters of the losing party are likely to mount efforts to discredit these results, seeking to benefit their party and candidates. In addition, irrespective of how fair and equitably the elections are administered by the ECB and how effective new regulations may prove, the ECB may find itself in a position where the Commission, without support, cannot legitimately certify the results of the elections. Such situations could destabilize the country and could discredit the elections process. Such a situation could prove untenable and would indefinitely add to the further erosion of public confidence in governance institutions.

By assisting domestic groups in creating research reports that cover relevant electoral topics that address voter concerns, IRI aims to expand public exposure to reliable and objective information that will provide important analysis surrounding the dynamics of the upcoming 2014 elections. Resultantly, over the longer term, these electoral reports and independent polling results will contribute to the growing body of knowledge that will aid voters in their pursuit to more effectively gauge the integrity of Bangladesh's electoral framework. IRI provides election watchers in Bangladesh with fundamental building blocks needed to improve upon long-term election monitoring efforts. Lastly, IRI works in cooperation with the ECB to reinforce the integrity of the election's results, to defend from partisan attacks on the results of voting through a comprehensive effort to track voter opinion trends throughout the elections process, both before elections, during the campaign period and afterwards.

CEPPS Objective 2.2 (NDI): International and citizen observers engage in sustained dialogue and action before, during and after the elections.

- Result 2.2.1: International election observation contributes to election integrity
- Result 2.2.2: Election observation findings and recommendations are monitored and/or promoted by independent and objective means

Planned activities are intended to engage citizen EMOs and activists, international election monitoring experts, and other key stakeholders to support the quality of monitoring efforts and coordination among observers that are working to support and deliver credible national elections in 2014. Following the elections, activities are intended to cement gains made during election period activities and to sustain momentum for electoral reform, stability and transparency.

Small international election assessment teams are fielded to assess electoral processes and challenges and to support citizen election monitoring organizations' election observation efforts. International actors can support citizen EMOs by lending comparative experience with elections challenges and with developing recommendations. In lieu of publicly releasing findings and recommendations to the media, the international assessment teams share their findings and recommendations with broad range of key stakeholders, including international donors, nonpartisan EMOs, the ECB. To the extent possible, these consultations will seek to build consensus among key stakeholders on priority recommendations to

promote an electoral process that could broadly be viewed as credible by Bangladeshi citizens, political parties, civil society and other key stakeholders.

Leading up to the elections, program activities supports domestic groups to operationalize the Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations (the Global Principles)<sup>38</sup> by focusing more intently on developing a sustainable monitoring model that features improved organizational capacity at the central level, fewer but higher quality, well-trained observers deployed in a more strategic manner, and more effective collection of and use of observer data in developing public reports and recommendations. Following the 2014 elections, activities prepare and support domestic groups to engage in independent and objective monitoring and advocacy for reform, as well as to participate in dialogues with the ECB and other election stakeholders to discuss electoral reforms.

### **USAID/B Objective 3: Reduced prevalence of election-related violence**

CEPPS Objective 3.1 (IFES): Improved capacity of formal and informal institutions to effectively resolve electoral disputes.

- Result 3.1.1: Improved capacity of ECB to effectively resolve electoral disputes
- Result 3.1.2: Stakeholders, including civil society and ECB, collaborate to address election violence

Through Objective 3, IFES supports reduction in the prevalence of election-related violence. Through trainings, legal reform, and support of community level mobilization, IFES is trying to improve the capacity of both formal and informal institutions to effectively resolve electoral disputes. Under Result 3.1.1 formal institutions, including the ECB and the Judiciary, will enhance their capacity to resolve electoral disputes through the legal channels allowing for formal complaints to be filed. Additionally, informal actors such as CSOs and community-based leaders will have an enhanced capacity to resolve electoral related complaints through alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, decreasing the levels of election-related violence.

CEPPS Objective 3.2 (IFES): Increased planning and coordination among electoral and security actors to better anticipate violence in order to prevent or manage it.

- Result 3.2.1: ECB better able to engage in collaborative efforts with security actors

Under Result 3.2.1 IFES increases the planning and coordination amongst electoral and security actors to better anticipate violence in order to prevent or manage it. Through providing technical expertise and training to the ECB as well as supporting and facilitating collaboration with other security actors, the ECB is trying to increase their ability to develop an action plan to enhance electoral security in the effort to anticipate needs for security surrounding the elections, and communicate this action plan to the public. As a result, citizens will become more confident in the preparedness of authorities to prevent electoral violence and feel more secure when going to the polls. A reduction in intimidation and violence will strengthen the political process as well as increase the public's feeling of safety on Election Day.

### **Critical Assumptions:**

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<sup>38</sup> The full Global Principles document can be accessed at: <http://www.gndem.org/declaration-of-global-principles>.

The development hypothesis and related program design are contingent upon a number of critical assumptions remaining true during the life of the program. These critical assumptions will impact the ability of CEPPS partners to measure change

- Trained members of the ECB will utilize the knowledge gained in trainings to audit campaign finance expenditure reports as well as make recommendations to amend law regarding the audit of campaign filings.
- Electoral stakeholders are willing to participate in ECB consultations to discuss campaign finance reform
- There exists a demand for increased accountability for campaign finance; and there is a population of media and civil society organizations that wishes to play, and can play, an active role in monitoring campaign finance;
- There exists free exchange of information and the capacity to absorb findings related to campaign finance; campaign finance regulations do not change in the lead up to the elections.
- A comprehensive body of knowledge that provides analysis of the conditions and attitudes surrounding the 2014 elections in order to maximize understanding of election dynamics among electoral stakeholders is created.
- Civil society organizations have access to sources of objective information with which to critique candidate filings.
- Polling methodology and results are recognized as objective sources of information by civil society and the public.
- International and citizen observers engage in sustained dialogue and action before, during and after the elections.
- International election observation contributes to election integrity.
- Election observation findings and recommendations are tracked and/or promoted by independent and objective means.
- Improved capacity of formal and informal institutions to effectively resolve electoral disputes.
- Judges serving on the Electoral Enquiry Committee, magistrates and temporary courts charged with adjudicating electoral offenses are willing to engage in IFES trainings on EDR and apply the knowledge and skills they learn in trainings to their work.
- The NGO Affairs Bureau approves potential sub-awardee proposals for work with IFES on election violence monitoring and alternative dispute resolutions components of the BESA project
- Increased planning and coordination among electoral and security actors to better anticipate violence in order to prevent or manage it.
- The ECB involves all relevant security actors within their electoral security plan, and these security actors participate in a cooperative manner

## **PROGRAM PLANNING, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The CEPPS partners based the division of labor in this application on the expertise required to implement the different components; existing relationships with local groups; and the comparative advantages of the respective Partners. In the program planning phase, NDI, IFES and IRI coordinated the design of the proposed program to include complementary activities that contribute to strengthening the integrity of the upcoming Bangladesh election processes. This division of responsibilities for achieving the program objectives required effective coordination at two levels:

- In Washington, DC, BESA has centralized formal communication through the CEPPS Director, based in Washington, D.C., in order to provide USAID/Bangladesh with one point of contact on all agreement-related issues and deliverables, and ensure coordination among the partners. All

formal submissions, such as work plans, PMPs, reports and prior approval requests, were coordinated with CEPPS implementing staff and submitted through the CEPPS Director.

- In Dhaka, CEPPS partners also strove to closely coordinate planned field activities in efforts to increase BESA's impact and sustainability. One partner supported the ECB (IFES) and the other partners (IRI and NDI) worked with other local stakeholders, while planning and coordinating their actions without compromising the independence of each partner.

## **II. Objectives of the Evaluation**

The objective of this final performance evaluation is to assess BESA's technical and programmatic validity, evaluate the implementers' performance in achieving the overall objective of the activity, and assess the sustainability of the project's achievements. The audience for this mid-term performance evaluation includes USAID/Bangladesh, the CEPPS partners (IFES, IRI and NDI), US Embassy and State Department in Bangladesh, the USAID Asia Bureau and, other bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors working for democratic governance and other concerned development partners.

## **III. Evaluation Questions**

### **Overall**

- **Effectiveness:** To what extent has the BESA program been effective in achieving its planned objectives? What added value has USAID brought to the electoral environment in Bangladesh through BESA? Were there any unexpected outcomes?
- **Relevance:** To what extent are the project's objectives and activities undertaken still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh (response should reflect program restructuring that took place post 2014 elections)?
- **Efficiency:** Has CEPPS been an effective and efficient mechanism for addressing the BESA project objectives? What have been the main advantages and challenges in the management of the project through CEPPS? Have the consortium members coordinated adequately in function of project objectives?

### **Component 1**

- In the current political context, is promoting electoral reform in campaign finance (and in other electoral reform topics) still relevant and feasible? In light of the challenges in working with the GOB and ECB in particular, what other approaches should USAID consider in follow-on projects?

### **Component 2**

- How effective was BESA in strengthening domestic elections monitoring through partnerships with local NGOs? What alternative strategy could be taken for follow-on projects in strengthening domestic election monitoring?
- How effective was BESA in strengthening local NGOs and media in conducting research? (IRI)

### **Component 3**

- How effective was BESA in addressing election violence and security issues? What challenges did BESA face in this component and how did the project respond? What other approaches BESA/USAID can think of while engaging with GOB on sensitive issues such as election violence and security?
- How successful was the partnership between PAVE and DPR fellowship program in addressing election violence?

#### **IV. Proposed Evaluation Methodology**

The information collected for this performance evaluation will be analyzed by the Evaluation Team to establish credible answers to the questions and provide major trends and issues. The Evaluation Team's work plan should include a data collection matrix, data collection instruments, and questionnaires, and proposed field visits. The evaluation team is encouraged to use mixed methodologies and suggest alternative approaches during the planning stage. The methodology should use key informant interviews with stakeholders, including USAID personnel, implementer management and staff from the CEPPS partner organizations, Bangladeshi CSOs, political parties, Government officials, etc. The team may use triangulation design in attempts to confirm, cross validate, or corroborate findings.

The Team will build on the proposed methodology and provide more specific details on the evaluation methodology in the Evaluation Work Plan (see Deliverables below). The evaluation will be participatory in its design and implementation and the evaluation methodology will be finalized through further review and discussion between USAID/Bangladesh and the Evaluation Team.

The methodology narrative should discuss the merits and limitations of the final evaluation methodology. In the final evaluation report, the evaluator should also detail limitations and how these limitations were addressed or how limitations were taken to account in proposing recommendations. The Evaluation Team will design appropriate tools for collecting data from various units of analysis. The evaluation team should include data collection tools in the detailed work plan. The tools could be revised and finalized with USAID during the evaluation and as part of the evaluation report. The evaluation team is encouraged to propose new methods of data collection and analysis in the work plan. At a minimum, the evaluation methodology will include following methods:

##### **I. Document Review**

The Evaluation Team shall review relevant USAID and sector specific documents, as well as key documents from USAID's implementing partners and outside sources. A suggested list of documents is included in Annex A. The Evaluation Team will use this literature to develop an initial response to the questions listed above, and to set forth hypothesized cause-effect relationships that can be tested through field research and interviews. The Evaluation Team will also use the information from the desk review to design tools for conducting key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

##### **2. Key informant Interviews**

The Evaluation Team will conduct interviews with key informants from USAID/Bangladesh, relevant USAID/ Washington staff, CEPPS partner staff in Washington and Dhaka, local sub-contractors and sub-grantees, relevant GOB representatives, political party and civil society representatives, the media, other donor agencies, and other relevant beneficiaries. These KIIs will help the evaluation team to collect opinion of the individual stakeholders to analyze the project achievements and challenges. For this purpose, the Team should establish a standard data collection format.

### 3. Focus Group Discussions

The evaluation should include focus group discussions (FGDs) with different stakeholders to secure detail information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions on overall project performance. The FGDs should be especially focused on staff and volunteers of the domestic monitoring organizations supported by NDI, and the media, CSO staff and volunteers involved in the activities carried out by IRI in support of greater scrutiny of campaign finance. For this purpose the Evaluation team should establish a standard data collection format.

#### Existing Sources of Information

USAID/Bangladesh DG Office will provide documents for the desk review that are not available from other sources and contact information for relevant interviewees. The list of documents is presented in Annex-B. The list is not exhaustive and the Evaluation Team will be responsible for identifying and reviewing additional materials relevant to the evaluation.

### VI. Deliverables

**All deliverables are internal to USAID** and the evaluation team unless otherwise instructed by USAID. Evaluation deliverables include:

**Evaluation Team Planning Meeting (s)** – essential in organizing the team’s efforts. During the meeting (s), the team will review and discuss the SOW in its entirety, clarify team members’ roles and responsibilities, work plan, develop data collection methods and instruments, review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the assignment and prepare for the in-brief with USAID/Bangladesh;

**Work Plan** – Complete a detailed work plan (including task timeline, methodology outlining approach to be used to answer each evaluation question, and describe in detail the team responsibilities, draft data collection tools and the data analysis plan): the draft work plan will be submitted within 10 working days after commencement of the evaluation; the final work plan will be submitted within 3 days after the international team members’ arrival in Bangladesh. **In-brief Meeting** – An in-brief meeting with USAID/Bangladesh will be held within 2 working days of international team members’ arrival in Bangladesh;

**Evaluation Design Matrix** – A table will be prepared that lists each evaluation question and the corresponding information sought, information sources, data collection sources, data analysis methods, and limitations. The matrix should be finalized and shared with USAID/Bangladesh before evaluation field work starts. It should also be included as an annex in the evaluation report.

**Data Collection Instruments** – Data collection instruments will be developed and submitted to USAID/Bangladesh during the evaluation design phase prior to the commencement of the evaluation field work. These instruments should be the part of evaluation work plan. The completed evaluation report should also include the data collection tools, instruments and list of people interviewed as an annex in the evaluation report.

**Weekly Updates** - The Evaluation Team Leader (or his/her delegate) will brief the Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs Evaluation (BDGPE) COR on progress with the evaluation on a weekly basis, in person or by electronic communication. Any delays or complications must be quickly communicated to USAID/Bangladesh as early as possible to allow quick resolution and to minimize any

disruptions to the evaluation. Emerging opportunities for the evaluation should also be discussed with USAID/Bangladesh.

**Debriefing with USAID** – A PowerPoint presentation of initial findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations will be made to USAID/Bangladesh before the international team members depart from Bangladesh.

**Debriefing with Partners** - The team will present the major findings from the evaluation to USAID partners (as appropriate and as defined by USAID) through a PowerPoint presentation prior to the team's departure from the country. **The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and activities only**, with no recommendations for possible modifications to project approaches, results, or activities. The team will consider partner comments and incorporate them appropriately in drafting the final evaluation report.

**Draft Evaluation Report** - – The Evaluation team will analyze all data collected during the evaluation to prepare a **draft Performance Evaluation Report** and submit the report within 15 working days on after the departure of international team members from Bangladesh. The draft report must be of a high quality with well-constructed sentences, and no grammatical errors or typos. **The report should answer ALL the evaluation questions and the structure of the report should make it clear how the evaluation questions were answered.** The draft report must meet the criteria set forth under the final report section below. USAID will provide comments on the draft report within ten working days of submission. The Evaluation Team will in turn revise the draft report into a **final Performance Evaluation Report**, fully reflecting USAID comments and suggestions.

**Final Report:** The Evaluation Team will submit a final Performance Evaluation Report that incorporates Mission comments and suggestions no later than ten working days after USAID/Bangladesh provides written comments on the draft Performance Evaluation Report. The format of the final report is provided below.

The final report must meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

- The evaluation report must represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.

- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final performance evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a cover sheet, table of contents, table of figures and tables (as appropriate), glossary of terms (acronyms), executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, scope and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Where appropriate, the evaluation should utilize tables and graphs to link with data and other relevant information. The report should include, in the annex, any “Statement of Differences” by any team member or by USAID on any of the findings or recommendations. The report **should not exceed 30 pages**, excluding annexes. The report will be submitted in English, electronically in both word and PDF forms. The report will be disseminated within USAID. Upon instruction from USAID, Social Impact (SI) will submit (also electronically, in English) this report **excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information** to Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) for dissemination among implementing partners, stakeholders, and the general public. The DEC submission must be within three months of USAID’s approval of the final report.

All quantitative data, if gathered, must be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. A CD with all the data could be provided to the COR/AOR.

The final report will be edited/formatted by Social Impact and provided to USAID/Bangladesh 15 working days after the Mission has reviewed the content and approved the final revised version of the report. The team might be requested to provide a public version of the report that exclude sensitive information depending on the content of the evaluation report.

## **VII. Team Composition/ Technical Qualifications and Experience Requirements for the Evaluation Team**

The proposed team composition will include one team leader (International expert) and one team member (National expert). USAID will select/approve the proposed candidates for each position based on the proposed methodology and the strength of the candidate(s).

**Team Leader (International):** Senior-level Evaluation Specialist with knowledge in different research methodologies and at least ten (10) years of practical experience in research or program evaluation in the field of elections and election support programs, with Bangladesh or Asia experience preferred. Graduate level qualifications from a recognized university in Political Science or a related field; post-graduate degree is a plus. Specific technical experience in the field of elections and election support programs in developing countries, whether through primary research, policy analysis, program design and management, program evaluation, or sector assessments is preferred. Proven experience as Team Leader on multi-person teams conducting assessment or evaluation assignments for USAID, and knowledge of USAID Evaluation Policy.

The team leader will provide leadership for the team, finalize the evaluation design, coordinate activities, arrange meetings, consolidate individual input from team members, and coordinate the process of assembling the final findings and recommendations. S/he will lead the preparation and presentation of the key evaluation findings and recommendations to USAID/Bangladesh. Ability to produce a high quality evaluation report in English is essential.

**Team Member (National):** At least 6-7 years of experience with in-depth knowledge and of issues relating to politics, democratic governance and elections in Bangladesh is required. Graduate level of qualifications from a recognized university in Political Science or a related field. Familiarity with the role and responsibilities of the Bangladesh Election Commission officials, and election observation is desired, as is experience in design, management, monitoring and evaluation of democratic governance programs. Prior experience and ability to conduct evaluations, in particular on elections, political party strengthening programs, and/or other relevant governance issues is required. S/he will work with the team leader and the evaluation team to arrange KIIs, and manage focus group discussions (FGD) and other data collection methods; analyze findings; and draft inputs for the evaluation report. Ability to produce high quality inputs for the evaluation report in English is essential.

Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs' Evaluation (BDGPE) will include Dhaka office based staff as third and fourth team members for this Evaluation. The Team will be supported by interpreter/translators (as needed) through the auspices of the Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Program Evaluations (BDGPE) project.

### VIII. Conflict of Interest

All evaluation Team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the program being evaluated. USAID/Bangladesh will provide the conflict of interest forms.

### IX. Scheduling and Logistics/Logistical Support and Government Furnished Property

The proposed evaluation will be funded and implemented through the BDGPE project. Social Impact will be responsible for all offshore and in-country administrative and logistical support, including identification and fielding appropriate consultants. Social Impact support includes arranging and scheduling meetings, international and local travel, hotel bookings, working/office spaces, computers, printing, photocopying, arranging field visits, local travel, hotel and appointments with stakeholders.

The Evaluation Team will be required to perform tasks in Dhaka, Bangladesh and also will travel to activity sites within the country. The evaluation Team should be able to make all logistic arrangements including the vehicle arrangements for travel within and outside Dhaka and should not expect any logistic support from the Mission. The Team should also make their own arrangement on space for Team meetings, and equipment support for producing the report.

### Schedule

Task/ Deliverable	Proposed Dates		
		Team Leader	Team Member (Natl)
Review background documents & preparation work: <b>Draft work plan</b> submitted to USAID/Bangladesh by 8/10/2015	7/27 – 8/10/2015	3	3
Travel to Bangladesh by expat team members	8/10 – 8/11/2015	2	
<b>Team Planning Meeting</b> hosted by BDGPE	8/12/2015	1	1
<b>In-brief</b> with USAID/Bangladesh	8/13/2015	.5	.5

Task/ Deliverable	Proposed Dates		
		Team Leader	Team Member (Natl)
Meet with CEPPS partner staff	8/13/2015	.5	.5
Submit Final <b>Work Plan to USAID</b>	8/16/2015	14	14
Data collection	8/15-8/30/2015		
Analysis and product drafting in-country			
Evaluation Team submits <b>annotated report outline and draft presentation</b> for USAID/Bangladesh DG Team review; data collection continues after submission	8/30/2015	-	-
USAID provides comments (as needed) on report outline and draft presentation; team continues field work	8/31-9/1/2015	2	2
<b>Presentation and debrief</b> with DG Team and USAID/Bangladesh	9/2/2015	.5	.5
<b>Debrief meetings with key stakeholders</b>	9/2/2015	.5	.5
Expat Team members depart Bangladesh	9/3-9/4/2015	2	-
Produce draft report to USAID	9/25/2015	6	3
USAID and partners review draft and provide <b>comments</b>	9/28-10/9/2015	-	-
BDGPE reviews draft comments, edits, finalizes, and submits to USAID	10/12-10/23	3	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>

## X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The total pages, excluding references and annexes, should not be more than 30 pages. The following content (and suggested length) should be included in the report:

Table of Contents

Acronyms

Executive Summary - concisely state the project purpose and background, key evaluation questions, methods, most salient findings and recommendations (2-3 pp.);

1. Introduction – country context, including a summary of any relevant history, demography, socio-economic status etc. (1 pp.);
  2. The Development Problem and USAID’s Response - brief overview of the development problem and USAID’s strategic response, including design and implementation of the PHR program and any previous USAID activities implemented in response to the problem, (2-3 pp.);
  3. Purpose of the Evaluation - purpose, audience, and synopsis of task (1 pp.);
  4. Evaluation Methodology - describe evaluation methods, including strengths, constraints and gaps (1 pp.);
  5. Findings and Conclusions - describe and analyze findings for each objective area using graphs, figures and tables, as applicable, and also include data quality and reporting system that should present verification of spot checks, issues, and outcomes (12-15 pp.);
  6. Lessons Learned - provide a brief of key technical and/or administrative lessons on what has worked, not worked, and why for future project or relevant program designs (2-3 pp.);
  7. Recommendations – prioritized and numbered for each key question; should be separate from conclusions and be supported by clearly defined set of findings and conclusions. Include recommendations for future project implementation or relevant program designs and synergies with other USAID projects and other donor interventions as appropriate (3-4 pp).
- Annexes – to include statement of work, documents reviewed, bibliographical documentation, evaluation methods, data generated from the evaluation, tools used, interview lists, meetings, focus group discussions, surveys, and tables. Annexes should be succinct, pertinent and readable. Should also include if necessary, a statement of differences regarding significant unresolved difference of opinion by funders, implementers, or members of the evaluation team on any of the findings or recommendations.

The report format should be restricted to Microsoft products and 12-point type font should be used throughout the body of the report, with page margins one inch top/bottom and left/right.

## ANNEX II: EVALUATION DESIGN MATRIX

<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Leads</b>
<b>Overall Effectiveness:</b>	DR = Document Review; KII = Key Informant Interview; FGD = Focus Group Discussion	Team Member: CAK = Constance Kaplan KM = Kazi Maruf AKM= AKM Saifullah
To what extent has the BESA program been effective in achieving its planned objectives?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM, AKM
What added value has USAID brought to the electoral environment in Bangladesh through BESA?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM, AKM
Were there any unexpected outcomes?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM, AKM
<b>Overall Relevance:</b>		
To what extent are the project's objectives and activities undertaken still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh (response should reflect program restructuring that took place post 2014 elections)?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM, AKM
<b>Overall Efficiency:</b>		
Has CEPPS been an effective and efficient mechanism for addressing the BESA project objectives?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM, AKM
What have been the main advantages and challenges in the management of the project through CEPPS?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM,AKM
Have the consortium members coordinated adequately in function of project objectives?	KII, FGD, DR	CAK, KM, AKM
<b>Component I</b>		

<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Leads</b>
In the current political context, is promoting electoral reform in campaign finance (and in other electoral reform topics) still relevant and feasible?	KII, FGD, DR	KM
In light of the challenges in working with the GOB and ECB in particular, what other approaches should USAID consider in follow-on projects?	KII, FGD, DR	KM
<b>Component 2</b>		
How effective was BESA in strengthening domestic elections monitoring through partnerships with local NGOs?	KII, FGD, DR	KM
What alternate strategy could be taken for follow-on projects in strengthening domestic election monitoring?	KII, FGD, DR	KM
How effective was BESA in strengthening local NGOs and media in conducting research? (IRI)		KM
<b>Component 3</b>		
How effective was BESA in addressing election violence and security issues?	KII, FGD, DR	AKM
What challenges did BESA face in this component and how did the project respond?	KII, FGD, DR	AKM
What other approaches BESA/USAID can think of while engaging with GOB on sensitive issues such as election violence and security?	KII, FGD, DR	AKM
How successful was the partnership between PAVE and DPR fellowship program in addressing election violence?	KII, FGD, DR	AKM

## ANNEX III: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Name:

Gender: F/M

Affiliation:

Date:

Time:

Interviewer:

### INTERVIEW GUIDE/GENERAL

#### Introduction:

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you for taking time to speak with us today. As you know, we are working with USAID/Bangladesh to conduct a performance evaluation of the Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA) program. This program is implemented by IFES, IRI, and NDI. We have reviewed many background documents to get a better idea of the project, however the documents can only tell us so much. That is why we are speaking with you today to hear about your experience working with this program and the groups. You can help us better understand how these projects function in the real world.

We are collecting information on your names, organizations, and positions in order to provide a list of the people who participated in this evaluation. However no particular findings or statements will be attributed to anyone. All data that we gather will be used for the sole purpose of this evaluation and will not be shared with any other audiences or used for any other purpose. We value your participation, which is voluntary. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, please let us know and we will simply move on to the next one.

Thank you again for taking time to speak with us today. Before we begin, do you have any questions about what we are doing?

<b>A</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>To what extent has the BESA program been effective in achieving its planned objectives?</b>
	a. Which objectives have been the most effective?
	b. Which objectives have not been met and why?
	c. Which components have been most effective?
<b>2</b>	<b>What added value has USAID brought to the electoral environment in Bangladesh through BESA?</b>

<b>A</b>	<b>Overall</b>
	a. Explain what type of added value specific programs brought. Did all programs bring added value?
	b. Were there political factors which influenced the ability to improve the electoral environment?
	c. Would other program activities involving the ECB bring added value?
<b>3</b>	<b>Were there any unexpected outcomes?</b>
	a. What were the unexpected outcomes?
	b. Were they created by or caused by the programs?
	c. Did they affect the overall effectiveness of the program?
	d. Are these factors still affecting the program?
<b>Relevance: (pertinent, applicable)</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>To what extent are the project's objectives and activities undertaken still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh (response should reflect program restructuring that took place post 2014 elections)?</b>
	a. Which programs were restructured following the 2014 elections?
	b. What were the key reasons for restructuring the program?
	c. Are they still relevant? In retrospect, should these programs have been altered?
	d. How were these programs altered?
	e. Would the ECB have been more receptive to other program activities?
<b>Efficiency:</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Has CEPPS been an effective and efficient mechanism for addressing the BESA project objectives?</b>
	a. Have the partners cooperated in program activities?
	b. Has there been duplication of activities?

<b>A</b>	<b>Overall</b>
	c. Has the partnership been able to address all objectives?
	d. Have the partners provided adequate guidance to their sub awardees?
	e. What were the main challenges in managing the sub-awardees?
<b>6</b>	<b>What have been the main advantages and challenges in the management of the project through CEPPS?</b>
	a. Could the program have been implemented by one group as opposed to the partnership?
	b. What are the strengths of each partner organization?
	c. What are the weaknesses of each partner organization?
<b>7</b>	<b>Have the consortium members coordinated adequately the functions of project objectives?</b>
	a. Has there been adequate communication between the partner groups?
	b. Have there been any difficulties between the partner groups?
	c. Has communication been sufficient between the partner groups?

<b>B</b>	<b>Project Detail</b>
<b>1</b>	Do you think your program was organized well?
<b>2</b>	Do you believe there were successes in the program?
<b>3</b>	Do you believe the program reached its intended targets?
<b>4</b>	Did you encounter difficulties?
<b>5</b>	Are there any areas of the project that you feel need improvement?
<b>6</b>	Are there any key groups or stakeholders who should be engaged in this project who are not?

<b>B</b>	<b>Project Detail</b>
<b>7</b>	How do you feel the project worked? (On a scale of 1-10?)  ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
<b>8</b>	Is there anything you feel is important for us to look at in this evaluation?

CEPPS Objective 1.1 (IFES): Strengthened analytical capacity of government bodies to audit candidate filings.

<b>C</b>	<b>Component 1</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>In the current political context, is promoting electoral reform in campaign finance (and in other electoral reform topics) still relevant and feasible?</b>
	a. Is there sufficient interest in campaign finance reform in Bangladesh?
	b. Which groups or persons appear to promote campaign finance reform?
	c. Are there other reform topics which seem to be more popular?
	d. What other electoral reform topics are currently under consideration?
<b>2</b>	<b>In light of the challenges in working with the GOB and ECB in particular, what other approaches should USAID consider in follow-on projects?</b>
	a. What are some of the challenges in working with the GOB and the ECB?
	b. How might these challenges be better addressed?
	c. Is there “buy-in” or support by the GOB and ECB to the electoral reforms proposed in this program?

CEPPS Objective 2.2 (NDI): International and citizen observers engage in sustained dialogue and action before, during, and after the elections.

- Result 2.2.1: International election observation contributes to election integrity
- Result 2.2.2: Election observation findings and recommendations are monitored and/or promoted by independent and objective means

<b>C</b>	<b>Component 2</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>How effective was BESA in strengthening domestic elections monitoring through partnerships with local NGOs?</b>

<b>C</b>	<b>Component 2</b>
	a. What domestic elections monitoring groups benefited from this program?
	b. Are these NGOs still active?
	c. Were they effective in election monitoring?
	d. What type of activities were used to strengthen their capabilities?
	e. Were adequate reports prepared to address their election monitoring activities following the elections?
<b>2</b>	<b>What alternative strategy could be taken for follow-on projects in strengthening domestic election monitoring?</b>
	a. Often, domestic groups lack administrative capabilities to maintain operational strength. Did this program address those topics?
	b. What necessary capacity building efforts should be made to strengthen domestic election monitoring groups?
	c. Do the groups appear to be interested in improving administrative capabilities?
	<b>Additional comments (if any):</b>

CEPPS Objective 3.1 (IFES): Improved capacity of formal and informal institutions to effectively resolve electoral disputes.

CEPPS Objective 3.2 (IFES): Increased planning and coordination among electoral and security actors to better anticipate violence in order to prevent or manage it.

<b>3</b>	<b>How effective was BESA in addressing election violence and security issues?</b>
	a. Where did electoral violence occur?
	b. Did this program actively work in those areas?
	c. Were these attempts successful?
	d. Are they still in place? What was the cause of the electoral violence?
<b>4</b>	<b>What challenges did BESA face in this component and how did the project respond?</b>
	a. What type of activities were promoted to address election violence?
	b. What type of activities were promoted to address security issues?
	c. Were there areas where there was electoral violence where this program did not work and why?
<b>5</b>	<b>What other approaches BESA/USAID can think of while engaging with GOB on sensitive issues such as election violence and security?</b>
	a. Electoral violence and security issues can affect electoral reform. Can addressing causes of this violence help eliminate it?

	b. What specific groups seemed to be responsible for the violence?
	c. Can this program work with those groups to eliminate electoral violence?
	d. What socio-economic and/or political causes might be at the base of electoral violence?
<b>6</b>	<b>How successful was the partnership between PAVE and DPR fellowship program in addressing election violence?</b>
	a. Did electoral violence occur where PAVE was active?
	b. Were other groups active in addressing election violence?
	c. How could they have been more successful?
	<b>Additional comments (if any):</b>

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

	Name	Cell Number	Signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
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10			

**Introduction:**

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you for taking time to speak with us today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be moderating our discussion today. With me are my colleagues \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

The purpose of this discussion is to talk with you about your experiences with the Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA) program, in particular the training program you attended and provided by IRI. You were selected for this discussion because you have participated in the People Against Violence (PAVE) training program organized by IFES and The Hunger Project. IFES wished that through this training you would become **Peace Ambassador** who will, in turn, persuade the political parties to maintain peaceful atmosphere before, during, and after the election. We have reviewed many background documents to get a better idea of the project; however the documents can only tell us so much. That is why we are speaking with you today to hear about your experience working with this program and the groups. You can help us better understand how these projects function in the real world.

We are collecting information on your names, organizations, and positions in order to provide a list of the people who participated in this evaluation. However no particular findings or statements will be attributed to anyone. All data that we gather will be used for the sole purpose of this evaluation and will not be shared with any other audiences or used for any other purpose. We value your participation, which is voluntary. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, please let us know and we will simply move on to the next one.

Let's talk a little about the ground rules of this discussion.

1. Everyone is encouraged to share their ideas and the discussion will be strengthened if everyone speaks.
2. There are no right or wrong answers. Everyone's views are of equal value.
3. The ideas you share should not be discussed outside this room with people who are not part of the group.
4. It is important that we respect each person's privacy and opinions.
5. Disagreements about the information may be valuable to the discussion, but we will not tolerate personal attacks or criticisms.

Thank you for taking time to speak with us today. Before we begin, do you have any questions about what we are doing?

Before we begin, I would like to ask each of you individually if you understand what we are doing here today and ask you whether or not you wish to continue in this focus group. If you decide not to continue, that is OK...there is no penalty for not participating. We just want to make sure you understand this is voluntary and we appreciate you working with us.

<b>A</b>	<b>Component 1</b>
<b>1</b>	How did you learn about this program?
<b>2</b>	Who actually invited you to attend this training program?
<b>3</b>	Why did you attend in this program?
<b>4</b>	What do you really want to achieve after this training?

<b>B</b>	<b>Component 2</b>
<b>1</b>	Can you please share some of the contents of the training program you attended?

<b>B</b>	<b>Component 2</b>
<b>2</b>	What was the most interesting topics in the training program? Can you please elaborate why you liked it so much?
<b>3</b>	Was there any content in the training that you did not like at all? Why?
<b>4</b>	Were the contents relevant to the context of your community / areas?

<b>C</b>	<b>Component 3</b>
<b>1</b>	Are you satisfied with the delivery of the training?
<b>2</b>	Were the trainers friendly enough to make things understandable to you?
<b>3</b>	Can you remember how many of the trainees were known to you before the training program?
<b>4</b>	What was the main message given in the training sessions?
<b>5</b>	What does the <b>Peace Ambassador</b> mean?
<b>6</b>	Do you think a training like this is enough to become a Peace Ambassador?

<b>D</b>	<b>Component 4</b>
<b>1</b>	Do you have anything to do after the training?
<b>2</b>	What was suggested in the training sessions to get involved with after the training?
<b>3</b>	Did you find it possible to keep doing it, as suggested in the training program?
<b>4</b>	What do you think the PAVE trainees should do after the training?
<b>5</b>	What kind of support is needed to implement what you have suggested above?

According to you, what are the main concerns in observing elections in Bangladesh?:

**Thanks for your time and contribution**

## ANNEX IV: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. BESA Contract Documents
2. BESA Work plans
3. BESA Quarterly Reports 2013-2015 (10 reports)
4. BESA M&E Plans (original, revised, and USAID approved)
5. BESA Contract Deliverables
  - a. IFES: Bangladesh Analysis: Campaign Spending Limits Comparison
  - b. IFES: Comparative International Practices Regarding Political Finance Regulation: Evaluation of Current Practice in Bangladesh
  - c. IFES: Political Finance Disclosure Audit and Database Plan; December 2014
  - d. IRI: Campaign Finance Monitoring Network Lessons-Learned Report
  - e. People Against Violence in Elections (PAVE) Training Report; Rangamati 12-13 and 15-16 November, 2014
  - f. Quarterly Report for April – June 2015; People Against Violence in Elections; S-15-048 The Hunger Project Bangladesh
6. BESA Training Materials
  - a. IFES: Curriculum for Peace and Conflict Training
  - b. IRI: CFMN Training Materials; Vol. 1-5
  - c. IRI: Research Training Academy Modules; Vol. 1-4
  - d. NDI: Training Guide for Trainers-Election Day Observation
  - e. NDI: Manual for Election Day Observation
7. Social Impact BESA Evaluation: CEPPS DC Input

### Articles and Papers:

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9. *Analysis of Citizen Election Observation of the 2014 Parliamentary and Upazila Elections, December*. Rep. Dhaka: National Democratic Institute, 2014. Web. 13 Oct. 2015.
10. *Bangladesh Election Support Activities Campaign Finance Monitoring Network Lesson-Learned Report*. Rep. Dhaka: International Republican Institute, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
11. *Bangladesh Parliamentary Elections December 29, 2008: Election Observation Mission Final Report*. Rep. Washington, D.C.: International Republican Institute, 2008. Web. 4 Aug. 2015.
12. *Bangladesh Public Opinion Survey: January 12-2*. Rep. Dhaka: International Republic Institute, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
13. *Barriers to Political and Electoral Participation for Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh*. Policy brief. Rep. Dhaka: International Republican Institute, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
14. *Campaign/Political Finance in Bangladesh- a report from IRI's Focus Group Discussions*. Rep. Dhaka: International Republican Institute, 2015. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
15. *Comparative International Practices Regarding Political Finance Regulation: Evaluation of Current Practice in Bangladesh*. Rep. Dhaka: International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
16. *Democracy in the Crossfire-Opposition Violence and Government Abuses in the 2014 Pre- and Post-Election Period in Bangladesh*. Rep. Human Rights Watch, 2014. Web. 11 Jun. 2015.
17. *Dhaka Youth Manifesto*. Rep. Dhaka: Institute of Informatics and Development, 2015. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
18. *EDR Indicator Definition*. Rep. Dhaka: International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
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20. *Election Dispute Resolution in Bangladesh: Assessment and Recommendations for Reform*. Rep. Dhaka: International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2013. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
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25. *International Best Practice: Election Dispute Resolution (EDR) in Bangladesh*. Rep. Dhaka: International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
26. Jennings, Melissa. *Guide for Communications and Advocacy: Strategy, WordPress, and Twitter*. Rep. no. 14. National Democratic Institute, n.d. Web. 13 Oct. 2015.
27. Khan, Shayan S. "The Right Kind of Connectivity." *Dhaka Tribune*, 25 Apr. 2015. Web. 13 Oct. 2015.
28. Lorch, Jasmin. "Elections in Bangladesh: Political Conflict and the Problem of Credibility." *International Relations*, 2 Feb. 2014. Web. 11 June 2015.
29. Mannan, Manzurul. *Democracy in Bangladesh: Political Impediments and Structural Imperatives*. Rep. Dhaka: International Republican Institute, 2014. Web. 13 Oct. 2015.
30. *Media Monitoring on 10th Parliamentary Election*. Rep. no. 1. Dhaka: n.p. Free Election Movement Association, and Institute for Innovative Media and E-Journalism, 2014. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
31. *People against Violence in Elections (PAVE) Training Program – Pilot Phase (Outcome and Results Analysis Report)*. Rep. Dhaka: International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2015. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
32. *Political Finance in Bangladesh: Assessment and Recommendations for Reform*. Rep. Dhaka: International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2013. Web. 23 Aug. 2015.
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## ANNEX V: PERSONS INTERVIEWED

### KII Participants

Name	Affiliation and Position	Gender	CEPPS/BESA Affiliation
Aktarun Naher	MRDI, Senior Program Officer	Female	IRI Training
Alistair Legge	IFES, COP	Male	CEPPS Partner
Amber Brooks	Office of Democracy and Governance, USAID, Director	Female	CEPPS Donor
Aroma Dutta	PRIP Trust, Executive Director	Female	NDI Election Monitoring and IRI Survey
Badiul Alam Majumder	THP, Executive Director	Male	Member of the Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group
Christine Hunter	United Nations Women	Female	IFES
Dilip Kumar Sarker	SHUJAN, Central Coordinator	Male	IFES Training and Rally
Dr. Iftekharuzzaman	TIB, Executive Director	Male	Member of the Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group
Fatimatul Batul	Democracy Watch, Field Coordinator	Female	IRI Research Training Academy
Feroze Nurun-Nabi Jugal	Democracy Watch, Program Coordinator	Male	NDI Training Participants
Helen Barnes	DFID Official, Tanzania (immediate past Governance Advisor of DFID, Bangladesh)	Female	DFID
HM Asif Haider	TMSS, Research and Documentation Officer	Male	IRI Partner
Hsan M Mazumdar	TAF, Country Representative	Male	
Jason Smith	Office of Democracy and Governance, USAID, Deputy Director	Male	CEPPS Donor
Juliette Schmidt	IFES, Deputy Regional Director	Female	CEPPS Partner
Kathleen Gibilisko	State Department, Political Advisor	Female	United States Embassy
Katie Croake	Democracy International Inc. Bangladesh, DCOP and Director of Grassroots Programs	Female	IFES Training

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation and Position</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>CEPPS/BESA Affiliation</b>
Kazi Shahidul Islam	NDI, Senior Program Manager	Male	CEPPS Partner
Khaled Mahmood Mustafa	Jaago Foundation, Senior Manager	Male	NDI and IRI Partner
M Azizur Rahman	IFES, M&E Coordinator	Male	CEPPS Partner
Manjurul Mannan	Independent University, Associate Professor	Male	IRI Research Grantee
Maymuna Akter Ruby	THP, PAVE Coordinator	Female	IFES
Md. Abdul Alim	EWG, Director	Male	Stakeholder
Md. Abdul Baki Milon	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES
Md. Ashequl Islam	Neilsen, Senior Manager	Male	IRI Survey
Md. Shahid Hossain	MRDI, Planning Advisor	Male	IRI Training
Mohammad Ariful Islam	NDI, Finance and Human Resources Manager	Male	CEPPS Partner
Mohammed Shahedunnabi Chowdhury	IFES, Senior Electoral Advisor	Male	CEPPS Partner
Mujib Mehedy	BNPS, Program Officer	Male	NDI Partner
Nasima Akter Joly	THP, Program Coordinator	Female	WAVE Member
Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah	JANIPOP, Chairman	Male	IRI Research and NDI Training
Nihar Ranjan Roy	TIB, Deputy Program Manager	Male	IRI Research Training Academy
Parvez Karim Abbasi	Department of Economics, East West University, Lecturer	Male	NDI
Peter Yates	TAF	Male	
Raghu Nath Raha	Brotee, Director and Chief Programs	Male	NDI Partner
Rishi Dutta	NDI, Resident Director	Male	CEPPS Partner
Rokeya Kabir	BNPS, Executive Director	Female	NDI Partner
Rokshana Khandaker	Khan Foundation, Executive Director	Female	NDI Associates
Ruzan Sarwar	IRI, Program Officer	Female	CEPPS Partner

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation and Position</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>CEPPS/BESA Affiliation</b>
Saikat Shubra Aich	PAVE, THP, Project Manager	Male	IFES Training
Siamul Huq Rabbani	Democratic Governance Cluster, UNDP, National Program Officer	Male	Stakeholder
Silja Paasilinna	IFES, DCOP	Female	IFES
Shafqat Munir	Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, Associate Research Fellow	Male	IFES and NDI Programs Attendee
Shahab Eman Khan	Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, Research Director	Male	NDI
Shakil bin Azad	TMSS, Senior Assistant Director	Male	NDI Partner
Sharmeen Murshid	Brotee, Chief Executive Officer	Female	NDI Partner
Swapan K Saha	THP, Deputy Director	Male	IFES Training
Zahid Al Amin	Institute for Innovative Media and E-Journalism, Journalist	Male	IRI Study

### **FGD Participants**

#### ***FGD with PAVE Trainees provided by IFES***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation and Position</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>CEPPS/BESA Affiliation</b>
Afroza Kusum	PAVE Trainee	Female	IFES
Ahsan Ullah	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES
Bubul Akhter	PAVE Trainee	Female	IFES
Hosneara Begum	PAVE Training	Female	IFES
Md. Abdul Baki Milon	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES
Md. Kamruzzaman	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES
Md. Mokhtar Hossen Suman	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES
Nargis Akter	PAVE Trainee	Female	IFES
Shahid Uddin Ahmmad	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES
Shudhr Chandra Mallobarmon	PAVE Trainee	Male	IFES

**FGD with Journalist trained by IRI on Election Reporting**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation and Position</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>CEPPS/BESA Affiliation</b>
Bilkis Irani	Radio Today, Staff Reporter	Female	IRI
Humayun Kabir	<a href="http://www.ntvbd.com">www.ntvbd.com</a> , Contributor	Male	IRI
Mahbub Masum	The Daily Alokito Bangladesh, Staff Reporter	Male	IRI
Pankaj Karmoker	Daily Star, Staff Reporter	Male	IRI

**FGD with Election Monitoring Master Trainers**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation and Position</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>CEPPS/BESA Affiliation</b>
Asif Haider	TMSS	Male	NDI and IRI
Lovely Talukdar	PRIP Trust, Manager	Female	NDI
Rafiqul Islam	Brotee, Manager	Male	NDI and IRI
Raghu Nath Raha	Brotee, Director and Chief Programs	Male	NDI Partner
Shefali Begum	PRIP Trust, Manager	Female	NDI and IRI

**FGD with DPR Youth Fellows received training from IFES**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation and Position</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>CEPPS/BESA Affiliation</b>
Arafat Billah Khan	Chhatro Dal (BNP affiliated students organization), Student Leader	Male	DPR Fellow/IFES Training
Maymuna Momen	Chhatro Dal (BNP affiliated Students organization), Student Leader	Female	DPR Fellow/IFES Training
Zedda Parvin Khan Rimi	Chhatro League (AL affiliated students organization), Student Leader	Female	DPR Fellow/IFES Training

## ANNEX VI: CEPPS/BESA (IFES, NDI, AND IRI) ACTIVITY LIST

### IFES Activities for BESA

Year/Quarter	Activities
FY 2013 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No activities reported. Start up.</li> </ul>
FY 2013 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ECB approved of IFES work plan and TIDE desk study initiated.</li> <li>Progress made in developing plan for Women's Committee to Deter Electoral Violence.</li> <li>Odhikar's EVER methodology has been improved to allow for more robust M&amp;E efforts.</li> <li>Electoral Security Advisor selected, and security materials gathered, for the advisor prior to his arrival.</li> </ul>
FY 2013 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TIDE desk study finalized and in-country assessment conducted.</li> <li>IFES prepared for the EDR Assessment through disseminating the Guidelines for Understanding, Adjudicating, and Resolving Disputes in Elections survey.</li> <li>IFES prepared for the first WAVE forum</li> <li>Odhikar's constituency selection methodology was finalized with international expert assistance.</li> <li>IFES conducted election security risk assessment.</li> </ul>
FY 2013 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study report on Political Finance in Bangladesh: Assessment and Recommendations for Reform, submitted to USAID and the ECB.</li> <li>The study report on the EDR in Bangladesh: Assessment and Recommendations for Reform, submitted to USAID and the ECB.</li> <li>EDR forms drafted for ECB review and consideration, and training material developed for EDR trainings.</li> <li>Day long WAVE forum with 20 participants organized.</li> <li>IFES shared preliminary findings of the security assessment report prepared by international expert Tom Karl Bil with Ambassadors and High Commissioners.</li> <li>20 ECB officials trained on election security.</li> <li>Planned to assist ECB in geographic information system mapping of the polling stations.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IFES tracked ECB's implementation of campaign finance regulations ahead of the parliamentary elections.</li> <li>IFES began preparations for campaign finance trainings.</li> <li>IFES has established and held meetings of the WAVE Working Group, and developed a curriculum for future trainings for women on the electoral process, electoral security issues, and conflict prevention/peace initiatives.</li> <li>IFES identified a number of alternative electoral violence monitoring methods in response to a rapidly changing security environment. Most notably, IFES began developing a tool to assist in future election violence monitoring.</li> <li>Local organization BIPSS contracted to provide analysis for IFES election security assessment.</li> <li>IFES provided training materials on elections; conflict and peace presentations to be used by IFES-trained Democracy International Fellows in local community trainings.</li> </ul>

Year/Quarter	Activities
FY 2014 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A concept on geographic information system mapping for better security coordination in future election developed for the ECB, as unable to work directly with ECB.</li> <li>• BRIDGE curriculum improved.</li> <li>• Importance of dialogue with ECB on campaign finance discussed with partners organizations. Invited TIB and SHUJAN to participate in an inter-agency technical group to offer guidance in areas such as anticorruption, political finance regulations and laws.</li> <li>• IFES team continued to monitor electoral disputes filed during the parliamentary election period.</li> <li>• Progress made on further contextualizing BRIDGE curriculum fit into Bangladeshi context.</li> <li>• Conducted a PAVE training for 11 female participants for the WAVE advisory group.</li> <li>• Delivered PAVE Workshops to DI's Fellows program.</li> <li>• Monitored the electoral and political violence surrounding the January 5 parliamentary elections as well as the first five phases of the upazila elections reported in the media.</li> <li>• IFES continued development of a web-based tool to map electoral and political violence.</li> <li>• Worked with the BIPSS to assess the security environment in Bangladesh during January 5, 2014 elections and the two-month post-election period.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussed with participants from PAVE trainings the political finance disclosure process was a recurring response when asked what is contributing to violence around elections.</li> <li>• Organized a two-day PAVE training in Bandarban, CHT, for 16 participants from civil society, the media, and eminent CHT persons. Due to demand from electoral stakeholders, IFES expanded the PAVE training.</li> <li>• IFES facilitated four two-day long trainings sessions. IFES developed PAVE Engage to strengthen the facilitation skills of the political party members to more effectively moderate discussions related to peaceful elections</li> <li>• IFES introduced the Code of Conduct for peaceful elections as a brainstorming exercise with political party members during the PAVE trainings to sensitize political parties keeping provisions preventing and penalizing election violence.</li> <li>• IFES continued development of a web-based tool to map electoral and political violence, adding the capacity of the tool to map peacebuilding initiatives.</li> <li>• Analyzed electoral security risks, opportunities, and areas for intervention.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In coordination with SUJAN, IFES developed a searchable database which can be used for analyzing submitted financial information by candidates and political parties.</li> <li>• IFES developed and shared a matrix for better utilizing Guidelines for Understanding, Adjudicating, and Resolving Disputes in Elections standards.</li> <li>• Organized a two-day workshop in Rajendrapur to build WAVE members' capacity for advocating peaceful elections and gender equality</li> </ul>

Year/Quarter	Activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DI fellows (after receiving PAVE training) organized peace rallies in seven districts of Bangladesh, highlighting the slogan <b>Songhat Noy, Oikker Bangladesh Gori</b> (Stop Violence, Build a United Bangladesh).</li> <li>• Decided to scale up PAVE training through sub grantees.</li> <li>• A media monitoring report on violence in election based on the six rounds of upazila elections was distributed to USAID and DFID.</li> <li>• Analyzed electoral security risks, opportunities, and areas for intervention given the current context. Additionally, prepared a matrix on recommendations and best practices in response to electoral security risks to be included as attachment.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepared a matrix at (on ECB request) using information the Political Finance in Bangladesh: Assessment and Recommendations for Reform study, including international practices.</li> <li>• ECB's unwillingness forced IFES to shift the focus of its political finance activities towards working with SHUJAN, TIB, and CEPPS/IRI through the Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group to coordinate and support the advocacy efforts for political finance reform.</li> <li>• The Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group met for the first time.</li> <li>• Development of disclosure database continued.</li> <li>• IFES conducted two two-day long PAVE trainings in Rangamati, CHT for 38 female karbari and headwomen.</li> <li>• WAVE Advisory Group given their feedback on key awareness messages developed.</li> <li>• Through competitive process, THP was selected to conduct PAVE training in five geographical areas</li> <li>• Introduced pre-and post-workshop questionnaires to collect quantitative and qualitative data from the PAVE trainings to measure a self-reported change in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.</li> <li>• Introduced to the (WAVE Advisory) group the concept of using the joint One Bangladesh brand as part of the public awareness campaign.</li> <li>• Started the process of adapting its Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) methodology to the Bangladesh media monitoring context.</li> <li>• Updated and finalized its Electoral Security in Bangladesh: Risk Assessment &amp; Recommendations report to reflect the current politically-tense, post-electoral operating environment.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitated a meeting of the Election Transparency and Integrity Working Group meeting and planned for electoral stakeholders training –mainly journalists and political party campaign staff–and a concept for a series of opinion pieces and activities on the influence of black money on the electoral process.</li> <li>• Steps taken to recruit a database specialist, and developed a detailed SOW for designing the web page, improving the search functionality, generating comparative reports, and training staff.</li> <li>• IFES signed a sub award agreement with THP Bangladesh for conducting PAVE trainings across four geographical regions of Bangladesh.</li> </ul>

Year/Quarter	Activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted a PAVE training for 21 young political party members (14 men and seven women) from DI's Fellows program.</li> <li>WAVE Advisory Group facilitated a town hall meeting in the CHT to commemorate the International Women's Day.</li> <li>Revised and adapted its EVER methodology for the monitoring of political and electoral violence through media in Bangladesh. Tested the revised methodology by recording the first set of data.</li> <li>Convened the inaugural meeting of the working group on election conflict and security, attended by members including Dhaka University, the Bangladesh Institute for Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), and Ananya Kallyan Sangshtha.</li> <li>Supported the National Girl Child Advocacy Forum by printing 30,000 leaflets with messages regarding women's empowerment and political rights.</li> <li>Facilitated a BRIDGE Gender and Elections showcase</li> <li>Conducted workshop with a focus on electoral conflict on behalf of United Nations Women.</li> <li>Provided support to Group on Political Governance (GPG) meeting focused on the electoral environment.</li> <li>CEPPS partners organized a roundtable on the state of democratic governance in Bangladesh with 25 participants from CSOs, the business community, academia, and young activists.</li> <li>IFES met with TAF and EWG to discuss joint advocacy on the gender gap in voter registration.</li> <li>IFES continued to provide Secretariat support to the GPG, a forum for donors and IPs.</li> </ul>

#### IRI Activities for BESA

Year/Quarter	Activities
FY 2013 Q1	
FY 2013 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalized the design parameters for its FGDs.</li> </ul>
FY 2013 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two FGDs conducted with 13 participants.</li> <li>RFP published for Public Opinion Survey.</li> </ul>
FY 2013 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalized its formal report on the FGDs.</li> <li>Preparation for three media trainings.</li> <li>Reviewed 23 research proposals to get five winners.</li> <li>Reviewed 13 proposals to get the winner (Fair Election Monitoring Alliance) for media monitoring.</li> <li>Discussed with Sujana to work together for the Booklets (on DFID recommendation).</li> <li>Nielsen was selected for conducting the Public Opinion Survey, the questionnaire was shared with major stakeholders.</li> <li>IRI getting prepared for the International Election Observation Mission.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified the MRDI as a partner but could not hold training due to security concerns.</li> <li>Finalized agreement with research sub-grantees.</li> <li>Held a three-day orientation on media monitoring methodology for project team members through Fair Election Monitoring Alliance/Institute for</li> </ul>

Year/Quarter	Activities
	<p>Innovative Media and E-Journalism. Also hosted a media monitoring roundtable in Dhaka.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted Public Opinion Survey and report submitted to IRI at the end of the quarter.</li> <li>• Arranged the logistics, selected 25 constituencies for observation by international monitors; and eventually postponed the process as instructed by USAID.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFMN established. Campaign Finance Monitoring Report of the Philippines Presidential Election 2010 with five partner organizations. Organizations agreed to assess their capacity to place campaign finance monitors for the final round of upazila elections.</li> <li>• Met with the group of four research sub-grantees on an individual basis to discuss necessary refinements to their research methodology or objectives in a post-national election environment.</li> <li>• Reviewed and finalized the preliminary study on media monitoring done by Fair Election Monitoring Alliance/Institute for Innovative Media and E-Journalism; Shared the report with civil society participants in a formal event.</li> <li>• Conducted a Post-Election Survey with 2,550 samples.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A two-day workshop to 15 master trainers, including 11 men and four women, three from each of the five CFMN partner organizations organized. These 15 also trained 100 monitors.</li> <li>• Three Capacity Building Trainings organized for 11 CSO partners on data analysis, report design and writing, and M&amp;E.</li> <li>• Through MRDI, IRI organized two trainings with print and television journalists on campaign finance reporting. Trainers include former ECB members, senior reporters from the Daily Star, and researchers from TIB.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRI tabulated and analyzed the 3,080 monitoring forms administered by the CFMN volunteers (10 constituencies prior to the final phase of upazila elections). Aggregate findings were presented to the CFMN partners.</li> <li>• A two-day, (Research Training Academy) workshop was conducted by a public opinion research expert, Robert Varsalone, and included lectures, discussions, group exercises, and interactive sessions with 21 participants from 11 CSOs.</li> <li>• RFP issued for additional research studies, BYLC was selected to conduct the study on the Nexus between Youth Aspiration and Political Culture among 14 received research grant applications.</li> <li>• Finalized questionnaire for 3rd Public Opinion Research.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two more RTA organized with thirty eight participants (20 women) from 13 CSOs.</li> <li>• Results were finalized and presented to USAID for release approval. IRI Bangladesh Country Director, Dimitar Stojkov, briefed USAID Mission Director, Janina Jaruzelski, USAID staff, and United States Embassy political office staff on the principal findings of the poll.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRI sought applications for the new iteration of its RTA for Bangladeshi CSOs and identified 12 new organizations to partner with.</li> <li>• IRI finalized a series of four Ek Bangladesh policy briefs based on the result of the four research grants reports.</li> </ul>

<b>Year/Quarter</b>	<b>Activities</b>
FY 2015 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRI led a meeting with the Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group to discuss the training of investigative journalists on political finance and the influence of black money on electoral processes.</li> <li>• IRI commenced its second RTA, which is inclusive of 12 participants (six women) from seven organizations.</li> <li>• A report summarizing the findings of this lessons learned effort on Campaign Finance Monitoring prepared for future reference.</li> <li>• IRI, in collaboration with the ECB, conducted a one-day training for journalists responsible for covering the city corporation elections in the Dhaka North and Dhaka South constituencies. Twenty three participants (five women) from 20 news outlets participated. Dr. N.A. Kalimullah, Journalist Shakhawat Liton of the Daily Star, and ECB Joint Secretary, Jesmin Tuly, facilitated the training.</li> <li>• IRI fielded its fourth national survey in the period immediately following the city corporation elections with 2,550 respondents in all seven divisions.</li> </ul>

#### **NDI Program Activities with BESA**

<b>Year/Quarter</b>	<b>Activities</b>
FY 2013 Q1	None reported
FY 2013 Q2	None reported
FY 2013 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two day training on Global Principles for seven NGOs.</li> <li>• Security assessment/plan.</li> </ul>
FY 2013 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One day dialogue with ECB and three NGOs and dialogue report.</li> <li>• Two-day training on Global Principles for seven NGOs.</li> <li>• Media and communications training for 23 people.</li> <li>• Four-day workshop for election managers.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One day dialogue with 13 NGOs on poll access for minorities.</li> <li>• Developed and distributed elections monitoring tool kit.</li> <li>• One-day training for 30 people on election monitoring.</li> <li>• One day training for 55 disabled observers.</li> <li>• ToT for 25 Master Trainers.</li> <li>• Organized visit by international elections assessment team.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresher training for 25 Master Trainers.</li> <li>• Master Trainers trained observers and coordinated observation in 60 upazilas.</li> <li>• BESA partners deployed 950 observers.</li> <li>• NDI headquarters experts conduct post-election assessment.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held three dialogue meetings (AL, BNP, and CSOs).</li> <li>• NDI developed an on-line data base for elections observation.</li> <li>• Post-elections training and report writing workshop for 10 NGOs.</li> <li>• Conducted a needs assessment of six NGOs.</li> <li>• Designed a research project on barriers to access.</li> <li>• Trained nine Master Trainers on research methods.</li> </ul>
FY 2014 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designed a workshop with ECB.</li> <li>• NDI's partner five NGOs completed an observation report.</li> </ul>

Year/Quarter	Activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized three (accounting principles and donor financial regulations, strategic plan development, and proposal writing) capacity development workshops for NDI's partner NGOs.</li> <li>• Met with EWG to coordinate.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized 10 (workshops and meeting) conferences by former Deputy Elections Commissioner of India, with ECB, PPs, and NGOs.</li> <li>• Finalized a report on dialogues held in Year 2 Q3.</li> <li>• Finalized the observation report on upazila elections.</li> <li>• Delivered one-day capacity development training for nine NGOs.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created an advisory group of nine young leaders.</li> <li>• Presented the observation report on upazila elections to ECB.</li> <li>• Held one advisory group meeting/policy briefing.</li> <li>• Began design of online portal to promote constructive youth engagement on elections and policy.</li> </ul>
FY 2015 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held three breakfast meetings with advisory group.</li> <li>• NDI gave Brotee a training manual to train observers for the upcoming city corporation elections.</li> <li>• Held a FGD with four CSOs on the online portal, Ek Bangladesh.</li> <li>• Supported two televised debates for the Dhaka city corporation elections.</li> <li>• Developed a Youth Manifesto with the advisory group.</li> <li>• NDI held coordination meetings with EWG.</li> </ul>

## ANNEX VII: ELECTION MONITORING ACTIVITIES UNDER BESA 2013-2015

Date	Number of Participants	Training Topic	Number of EMOs	Comments
May 25-30, 2013	180	Organizational Capacities for Global Principles	26	
June 9, 2013	18	Media and Communication	5	
August 20, 2013	12	Election Observation Management	7	No exact number was mentioned in the work plan and report; number is estimated
October 5, 2013	30	Election Observation for Non-traditional Actors		
November 23, 2013	55	Election Observation for Physically Challenged Citizens		
November 2-6, 2013	100	Master Trainers Training	5	
November 4, 2013	12	Master Trainers Training for EWG and Independent Observers	6	No exact number was mentioned in the work plan and report; number is estimated
February 9-20, 2014	25	Refreshers Training for Master Trainers	5	
February 2014	950	Election Observer	5	Training given by the Master Trainers of the EMOs
May 14, 2014	-	Training on Lessons Learned and Report Writing	5	No exact number was mentioned in the work plan and report; number is estimated
June 8, 2014	-	Training on Contact Database	5	No exact number was mentioned in the work plan and report; number is estimated
July-October, 2014	-	Capacity Building Training Workshops	5	No exact number was mentioned in the work plan and report; number is estimated

Sources: "CEPPS-NDI Bangladesh FY 2013 Work Plan Year One with notes for SI" and "CEPPS-NDI Bangladesh FY 2014 Work Plan Year Two for SI"

## ANNEX VIII: BESA WORKING GROUPS, ADVISORY GROUPS, AND NETWORKS\*

Name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Purpose	Members	Status
Campaign Finance Working Group	X			Develop strategy regarding campaign finance regulations	Experts in the areas of anticorruption, political finance regulations, and laws	NF
Women's Committee to Deter Electoral Violence	X	X		Develop platform for discussions on electoral violence	Women leaders, political party representatives, and members of CSO's working on gender focused initiatives	NF
Joint Election Operation Center	X			Coordinate election security matters	Relevant security actors, such as the ministries of home affairs and defense	NF
Community Based Response to Election Violence Teams	X	X		Cultivate avenues to resolve disputes	Respected local elders, religious and community leaders, peace activists, women's groups, school teachers, youth, and other local persons of capacity and commitment to peace building	?
Formal/Informal Coalition of EMOs	X	X		Support efforts to improve election monitoring	Core group of 10 to 15 CSO's interested in developing a sustainable monitoring model following global principles	?
CFMN		X		Monitor and report on campaign expenditures	CSO's, domestic election observers, and journalists interested in monitoring campaign finance	NF

Name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Purpose	Members	Status
Inter-agency Technical Advisory Group		X		Platform for dialogue on political finance	Local experts on political finance	?
WAVE Advisory Group		X	X	New name for Women's Committee to Deter Electoral Violence	Women leaders, political party representatives, and members of CSO's working on gender focused initiatives	
GPG			X	Political dialogue group	Prominent Bangladeshi citizens and international partners	IFES acts as secretariat
EK Bangladesh Working Groups (two or five groups)			X	To make a direct link between increasing technical expertise in creating demand for better electoral governance	CEPPS partners, local partners, and reform minded citizens	F
Electoral Transparency and Integrity Working Group			X	Provide technical expertise	Relevant stakeholders	F
Election Conflict and Security Working Group			X	Share information on causes of electoral conflict	Security actors	F
Informal Advisory Group of Next Generation Leaders			X	Provide input on initiatives in various areas	Educated young people interested in political issues	F
Youth Advisory Working Group			X	Plan policy breakfasts	Educated young people interested in political issues	F

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ambassadors for Peace			X	Mobilize people within their community	PAVE training participants who have an interest in serving as advocates for peace	F
Electoral Empowerment and Inclusion			X			NF
Electoral Systems and Management			X			NF
Election Monitoring and Participation			X			NF

\*Information found in CEPPS Work Plans, 2013, 2014, 2015 and IFES Working Groups Summary

Key: **F**: Functioning **NF**: Non-Functioning **?**: Unknown

**ANNEX IX: RESEARCH TRAINING ACADEMY TRAINING 2014-2015**

Date	Number of CSOs	Number of Participants			Topic
		M	F	Total	
August 27-28, 2014	11	11	10	21	Qualitative Research Methods and FGDs
October 22-23, 2014	13	11	12	23	Sampling Theory and Survey Method
December 17-18, 2014	9	7	8	15	Questionnaire Design and Public Opinion Survey
May 4-5, 2015	11	9	9	18	Quantitative Research and Public Polling

## ANNEX X: PAVE TRAINING ACTIVITIES

### PAVE Training During the Pilot Phase

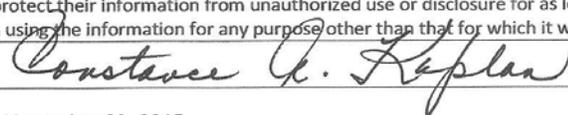
Training	Locations	Dates	Female	Male	Total
PAVE with DI Fellows	Dhaka	July 14, 2013	16	21	37
PAVE with DI Fellows	Dhaka	February 24, 2014	13	15	28
PAVE for WAVE Advisory Group	Dhaka	March 13, 2013	10	0	10
PAVE and BRIDGE for EWG members	Dhaka	May 7-8, 2014	6	14	20
PAVE for DI Fellows	Dhaka	May 11-12, 2014	25	0	25
PAVE Engage for DI Alumni Political Violence Working Group	Dhaka	June 1-2, 2014	9	17	26
PAVE for CHT groups	Bandarban	June 4-5, 2014	10	6	16
PAVE training for Headman Karbari	Rangamati	November 12-13, 2014	20	0	20
PAVE training for Headman Karbari	Rangamati	November 15-16, 2014	18	0	18
<b>Total</b>			<b>127</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>200</b>

### PAVE Participants Trained by THP by Profession and Gender

Profession	Male	Female	Total
CSO	72	31	103
Political Party (non-elected)	118	40	158
Elected Representative	31	42	73
Academia	60	23	83
Student	28	12	40
Media	42	1	43
Other	35	25	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>560</b>

## ANNEX XI: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### ANNEX VII: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Name	Constance A. Kaplan
Title	Team Leader
Organization	Social Impact, Inc.
Evaluation Position?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	Contract # AID-OAA-1-10-00003 Task Order # AID-388-T0-12-00001
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	BDGPE – Bangladesh Election Support Activities Final Performance Evaluation
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.</li> <li>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</li> </ol>	<p>I worked periodically with IFES between 1995 and 2010.</p> <p>I worked with IRI in 1996 in China.</p> <p>I worked with USAID in 2013 in Nigeria</p> <p>I have never worked with any agency or NGO in Bangladesh prior to this assignment.</p>
<p>I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.</p>	
Signature	
Date	November 23, 2015

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	AKM Saifullah
Title	Deputy Chief of Party
Organization	Social Impact
Evaluation Position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number(contract or other instrument)	AID-388-TO-12-00001
USAID Project(s) Evaluated(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	BESA Program, (CEPPS) - Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.</li> <li>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</li> </ol>	

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Signature	
Date	13 April 2015

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

<b>Name</b>	Kazi Maruful Islam
<b>Title</b>	National Consultant
<b>Organization</b>	Social Impact
<b>Evaluation Position?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
<b>Evaluation Award Number(contract or other instrument)</b>	AID-388-TO-12-00001
<b>USAID Project(s) Evaluated(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</b>	Bangladesh Election Support Activities (BESA)
<b>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.</li> <li>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</li> </ol>	

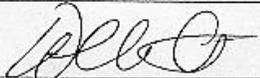
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<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	16 August 2015

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

<b>Name</b>	William J. Cartier
<b>Title</b>	Chief of Party
<b>Organization</b>	Social Impact
<b>Evaluation Position?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
<b>Evaluation Award Number(contract or other instrument)</b>	AID-388-TO-12-00001
<b>USAID Project(s) Evaluated(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</b>	BESA Program, (CEPPS) - Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
<b>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</b></p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</li> <li>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.</li> <li>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</li> <li>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</li> </ol>	

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<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	4/14/2015

U.S. Agency for International Development  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20523