Bangladesh Counter Trafficking-in-Persons

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

FY 2015 QUARTER I
(24 OCTOBER–31 DECEMBER 2014)

Cooperative Agreement No. AID-388-A-14-00003

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Table of Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations........................................................................................................................................... 3
I. BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION................................................................................................................................. 4
II. POLITICAL CONTEXT AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT............................................................................................. 4
III. PROGRAM OUTCOMES................................................................................................................................................ 5
IV. SUMMARY OF THE ACTIVITIES.................................................................................................................................... 5
V. TRANSITION GRANTS.................................................................................................................................................... 8
VI. ENCOUNTERED CHALLENGES...................................................................................................................................... 8
VII. FINANCIAL INFORMATION........................................................................................................................................... 9
VIII. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION...................................................................................................................................... 10
IX. PROGRAM PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER.................................................................................................. 11
## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>Actions for Combating Trafficking-in-Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC/TIP</td>
<td>Bangladesh Counter Trafficking-in-Persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNWLA</td>
<td>Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSHER</td>
<td>Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBSG</td>
<td>Capacity Building Service Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTC</td>
<td>Counter-Trafficking Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOB</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO-NGO</td>
<td>Governmental/Non-Governmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization of Migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEWOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOWCA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women and Children Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOHA</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>National Plan of Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>OEMA</td>
<td>Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSA</td>
<td>Public Service Announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSHTA</td>
<td>Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act of 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Recruiting Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>RFA</td>
<td>Request for Application</td>
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<tr>
<td>RRRRTF</td>
<td>Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Reintegration Task Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Trafficking-in-Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDC</td>
<td>Union Digital Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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</table>
I. BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Trafficking-in-persons (TIP) is the fastest growing criminal activity worldwide and takes several forms, including exploitation of men, women and children into bonded or abusive labor or the commercial sex trade. TIP is one of the largest sources of illegal income globally. Trafficking violates basic human rights, damages lives, feeds corruption, exerts an economic toll on governments and citizens, and harms society at all levels.

The five-year Bangladesh Counter Trafficking-in-Persons (BC/TIP) Program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and implemented by Winrock International, works in 25 trafficking-prone districts to address the trafficking problem. BC/TIP provides robust interventions in all four of USAID’s areas of emphasis: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership. It connects local and national government representatives, non-governmental organizations, citizens and community leaders to prevent trafficking-in-persons, protect survivors and reverse damage done to them, prosecute crimes of perpetrators, and engage all levels of society as change agents in curbing the crime. The BC/TIP Program works collaboratively to reduce the prevalence of human trafficking in Bangladesh by:

- Strengthening the capacity of communities to identify trafficking victims and take action;
- Improving trafficking victims’ access to assistance;
- Increasing the responsiveness of criminal justice actors to trafficking victims; and
- Facilitating effective and coordinated partnerships among stakeholders to combat trafficking.

The purpose of this report is to outline program activities undertaken during the BC/TIP program’s first two months and one week and to present the findings and recommended strategies for successful program implementation. The report includes discussion of the current political situation in Bangladesh and the risks and challenges likely to be faced during its implementation in the future.

II. POLITICAL CONTEXT AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Presently, the political landscape of Bangladesh is fluid and unsettled. The last parliamentary elections held in 2014 created a high-scale conflict between the ruling party AWAMI League (AL) and the other major political party, the Bangladeshi National Party (BNP).

The recent political unrest has led to tension and multiple protests. Fearing a return to the state of destructive brinkmanship seen prior to the country’s 2014 election, the United Nations Human Rights Office has expressed concern over the rising levels of political violence rippling across Bangladesh and has urged both the ruling party and the opposition parties to initiate dialogue, address the violence, and show restraint.

If the political unrest continues, BC/TIP may face challenges when implementing planned activities in target locations. BC/TIP will continue to assess the situation and generate solutions if the political situation becomes more volatile.
III. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

During its first partial quarter of operations and in accordance with the implementation plan, BC/TIP focused on project mobilization described in the sections below. These efforts established solid footing for program achievements in the future. The majority of tasks were carried out according to the proposed timeline, including office setup, procurement and staffing. A few of the planned tasks, including subaward selection and subagreement signing, will stretch into the second quarter. BC/TIP project management adjusted the timeline for these activities to ensure that all key personnel were on board and had a chance to input into subaward strategy. The process of subaward signing is expected to be completed during Q2 FY2015.

The program implementation plan for the first program year was developed and submitted to USAID. The program M&E plan was drafted. These documents are important milestones in project planning and will provide a roadmap for effective BC/TIP implementation.

With COP joining at the end of November and the DCOP in middle of December, BC/TIP has already succeeded in activating relationships with former ACT partner, including GOB counterparts, and actively participate in the activities of the anti-trafficking sector. Based on the foundation of the ACT program, BC/TIP managed to establish a visible role as a lead program.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE ACTIVITIES

The main focus of the BC/TIP first incomplete quarter was to complete project mobilization and setup (refer to Section VIII, Project Administration) and commence stakeholder engagement (refer to IR 4. Partnership).

Another important task during this period was to draw up a detailed plan and timetable for program implementation. These details are included in the First Annual Implementation Plan, which was submitted to USAID on December 23, 2014. In January, the M&E Plan was drafted and consultations with prospective BC/TIP partners were conducted. The M&E Plan is due for submission on January 24, 2015.

IR 1: PREVENTION: Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Identify Trafficking Victims and to Take Action

The BC/TIP prevention activities focus on increasing the capacity of targeted communities to identify TIP victims and at-risk individuals in order to prevent and address incidents of trafficking. BC/TIP strives to equip students, migrants, and local leaders with tools, support, and knowledge to inform and mobilize communities to identify TIP incidents/traffickers, promote safe migration, connect survivors to services, and address root causes of TIP, especially gender-based violence. BC/TIP uses peer-leader education and survivor voice activities as primary mechanism to reach at-risk groups and implement public mobilization in target areas. BC/TIP also trains migrants on safe/smart migration, monitors recruiting agencies, activates counter-trafficking committees, and improves the capacity of government agencies.

During the reporting period, the BC/TIP team met with former ACT project partners - Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSHER) and Rights Jessore - to discuss the framework for future partnerships under the BC/TIP Prevention component. During the meeting, the partners shared lessons from ACT and challenges they face in addressing trafficking. A few of the specific areas that the partners emphasized were:
1. The filing of TIP cases at police stations should be reviewed and improved;
2. Police and lawyers need further training on the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking ACT (PSHTA) and the Overseas Employment & Migrants Act (OEMA);
3. (Re)activation of CTCs at different administrative levels is vital to anti-trafficking efforts. This can be done via orientation sessions, workshops on the CTC responsibilities and how their involvement is changing the lives of people in the communities they serve;
4. Coordination with District Legal Aid Committees should be utilized to serve BC/TIP beneficiaries.

Another important issue on the agenda of the meeting was BC/TIP’s emphasis on partnership and coordination of all activities. The need for an effective national referral that benefits people in need of services was raised as another priority by the former ACT partners.

**IR 2: PROTECTION: Improved Access of Trafficking Victims to Assistance**

BC/TIP protects trafficking victims in Bangladesh through comprehensive referral systems, integrated assistance, survivor leadership, and community-based reintegration support. To attain this objective, Winrock trains local partners in service standards, case management, and psycho-social support to ensure consistent, high-quality services that meet survivors’ needs.

During the reporting period, BC/TIP met with ACT partners SHISHUK and Dhaka Ahasania Mission to discuss their achievements under ACT, get an in-depth understanding of the sector, and explore BC/TIP priority intervention areas. A few of the specific areas that the partners emphasized during the meeting were:

- A focus on the sustainable livelihoods initiatives for survivors through partnership initiatives;
- Potential to utilize a peer-leader group from Union Digital Center Entrepreneurs to disseminate safe migration messages among the community; and
- Activation of CTCs at district, upazila and union levels will support partners’ activities by improving survivors’ integration back into their communities and protection of victim witnesses.

On several occasions during the meeting, it was emphasized that strengthening the coordination among relevant stakeholders/partners is imperative to ensuring the protection of victims/survivors.

**IR 3: PROSECUTION: Increased Responsiveness of Criminal Justice Actors to Trafficking Victims**

Prosecution activities focus on increasing the responsiveness of criminal justice actors to trafficking victims. To improve prosecution practices, BC/TIP employs multi-disciplinary trainings, networking, and capacity-building on the rules and laws governing TIP, migration and witness protection. These efforts are coupled with coordinated advocacy for expanded government oversight and improved monitoring of labor recruitment agencies.

During the reporting period, a review of the training provided by ACT began. The training materials will be updated to reflect the current situation in Bangladesh and will be adapted to address both first line police officials and specialized investigators. To inform the process, a meeting with UNDP’s Police Reform Program, represented by Gerard Smiths, Investigations and Operations Specialist, took place and an agreement on coordination and exchange of experiences was reached. In addition, BC/TIP
identified several organizations engaged in training of prosecutors and judges and will set up meetings to coordinate activities and learn from each other.

IR 4: PARTNERSHIP: Effective and Coordinated Partnership among Stakeholders to Combat Trafficking-in-Persons

Partnership activities build on established relationships to effectively combat human trafficking through collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), the Ministry of Woman and Child Affairs (MOWCA), the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE), partnerships with the private-sector and civil society, and coordination with other international organizations. BC/TIP fosters partnerships at the national, regional, district, and union levels to strengthen the policy environment, and connect local government and community efforts with national policies.

Based on the previous record set by the ACT program, BC/TIP is perceived as a major player and contributor in the field of anti-trafficking in Bangladesh. As a result, the program is invited and consulted by GOB at different levels, but also by NGOs and international organizations. On several occasions, BC/TIP provided technical advice and shared experiences and lesson learned under the ACT and other programs.

During the reporting period, BC/TIP participated in a Vigilance Task Force meeting, organized by MEWOE. The meeting updated participants on the situation of the migrants passing through the airport. The discussion also focused on the practices employed by recruiting agencies when obtaining work visas. BC/TIP participation in these meetings ensured that the project is aware of new trends in migration identified by different agencies and that those are translated into effective responses on a local level. In addition, BC/TIP has the opportunity to provide input and contribute knowledge and expertise in anti-trafficking and safe migration.

In December 2014, a consultative workshop with all the potential partners (which were previously part of the ACT program) was conducted. During the workshop, BC/TIP staff members delivered a presentation on the structure of the program and the priorities identified. Group work was used to determine the linkages between the potential partners' priorities and BC/TIP activities.

On the December 18th, BC/TIP participated in the International Migrants Day program, organized by MEWOE, which included a rally, discussion sessions, case studies and experience exchanges. The ceremony was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina.

On December 24th, BC/TIP participated in a consultation meeting organised by Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA). The meeting focused on Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Reintegration Task Force (RRRRTF). The consultation sought to develop a comprehensive SOP, which would address the needs of women, children and men.

During the reporting period, an introductory meeting with MOHA took place. In this meeting, the GOB outlined their priorities on launching NPA (National Plan of Action) and start up of its implementation. BC/TIP will support the MOHA in finalizing and launching the NPA and participate in the GO-NGO Committee, as well as other committees. As a follow up, BC/TIP was invited to attend an NPA consultation meeting with the GOB and NGOs to review the final draft of the NPA. Input was collected from each of the organizations involved in and responsible for the implementation process.
BC/TIP also participated in the “National Consultation on Human Trafficking and Smuggling”, organized by International Organisation of Migration (IOM) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The focus of the National Consultation was to discuss the key challenges in trafficking in south-eastern Bangladesh and to develop recommendations to address this problem using the 4Ps: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership.

Additionally, BC/TIP attended the mid-term evaluation presentation of Counterpart International’s Leadership Development Program, funded by USAID. The discussions were focused on participants’ experiences and lessons learned from program implementation.

V. TRANSITION GRANTS

One of the major objectives of BC/TIP is building the capacity of Bangladeshi trafficking prevention organizations to manage programs funded directly by USAID. Thus, Winrock has partnered with CBSG to assess and improve the capacity of selected organizations, ensuring that at least two of them qualify for USAID funding by the end of 2016.

During this quarter, BC/TIP team held several discussions with the CBSG team to strategize and plan the transition awards for the selected subgrantees. Additionally, during the consultation workshop with the previous partners, CBSG gave a presentation on the process that will be used to assess their organizational capacity and the methods which will be used to support their organizational strengthening.

CBSG submitted their work plan and will sign the contract by the beginning of the 2nd quarter.

VI. ENCOUNTERED CHALLENGES

In general, Winrock completed project start-up activities as planned and without significant obstacles. The team did face challenges in finding an appropriate and affordable office space, due to ever-rising rental prices in Dhaka.
VII. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The actual expenses below do not include costs that have been committed but not yet expended due to delay with adding signatories to the bank account. It is expected that the project will fully catch up with its projections in January 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Items</th>
<th>Budget Amount</th>
<th>Projected Q1 FY 2014</th>
<th>Actual Q1 FY 2014</th>
<th>Amount Remaining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary and Fringe</td>
<td>1,480,359</td>
<td>28,565</td>
<td>20,123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and Allowances</td>
<td>185,027</td>
<td>19,550</td>
<td>5,277</td>
<td>179,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment and Supplies</td>
<td>21,903</td>
<td>20,432</td>
<td>364.53</td>
<td>21,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Direct Costs</td>
<td>371,411</td>
<td>27,221</td>
<td>5,172</td>
<td>316,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subagreements</td>
<td>841,702</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>1,096,326</td>
<td>28,312</td>
<td>17,328</td>
<td>1,078,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COSTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,996,728</strong></td>
<td><strong>124,080</strong></td>
<td><strong>59,990</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,936,738</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winrock Cost Share</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subagreement Cost Share</td>
<td>106,050</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>106,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL AGREEMENT</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,202,778</strong></td>
<td><strong>124,080</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4,142,788</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. Program Mobilization

During the first project quarter, Winrock, relying on its presence in Bangladesh, quickly launched project operations, including opening a bank account, identifying an appropriate project office space, signing the lease, completing necessary procurement, and arranging installation of telecommunications and the office network.

Staff and Recruitment. Five former ACT project staff joined BC/TIP team during the first two months of the program to ensure rapid start-up. Reza Rashed Morsedur filled the position of Finance and Administration Manager, Dipta Rakshit – Technical Team Leader and Protection Advisor, Nadim Rahman – Prevention Manager, AKM Ataul Goni – Accountant, and Rafiqul Islam – Office Assistant. The COP, Irinel Cocos, joined the program on November 23 and the DCOP, Sheela Haq, joined on December 18. The recruitment process for the other team members (M&E Specialist, Prosecution Manager and Office Manager) was initiated and applications were received and reviewed. Interviews are currently under way.

USAID Compliance Orientation. On November 17, 2014, Winrock’s Associate Director of Awards Management conducted an orientation on USAID Award Compliance for Winrock staff in Bangladesh. From BC/TIP, the DCOP, Finance and Administration Manager, Technical Team Leader, and Prevention and Communications Manager attended the training. The orientation covered Agency Specific Regulations under Cooperative Agreements: ADS 206, 216, 303, 320, 22 CFR 226, 22 CFR 230, Gender; AAPDs; super circular and cost principles; subaward competition and substantial involvement, and approval requirements.

COP Training. In December 2014, Irinel Cocos traveled to Winrock’s Home Office in Arlington, Virginia, for project management and operational training. During the five-day course, the COP was oriented to Winrock processes and procedures for project budgeting, procurement, accounting, human resource management, and communications. In addition to these practical sessions, Winrock’s Awards Management Department walked through the rules and regulations governing BC/TIP’s cooperative agreement and the organization’s delegation of authority policy. Finally, the COP and BC/TIP Home Office support team, which includes an Office Manager and a M&E Specialist, drafted the BC/TIP first implementation plan using inputs from the field team.
IX.  PROGRAM PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

During the next quarter, BC/TIP will focus on the following activities:

- M&E Plan submission by 24th Jan and baseline data collection
- CBSG subaward finalization and implementation of organizational capacity assessments of the identified partners
- Issuance of request for applications (RFA) for subawards under Prevention and Partnerships development
- Finalization of scopes of work, approval and signing of subawards under Protection
- National Plan of Action (NPA) finalization and official launch
- BC/TIP program launch
- Recruitment finalization for the positions of: M&E specialist, Prosecution Manager and Office manager
- Home Office Manager trip to Bangladesh to support further program implementation and management