MORE EFFECTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY ADVOCACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BANGLADESH

Initial Needs Assessment, Project Strategy, and Workplan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. *Objectives*:   This program supports USAID/Bangladesh's Intermediate Result 9.3: "More effective civil society advocacy of human rights."   The long-range goal of the program is to establish an environment that respects rights and protects vulnerable groups from rights violations.   The more modest and immediate objective is to help civil society coalitions and human rights organizations develop more effective strategies to reduce human rights abuses and influence public policies on human rights issues.   The program will be implemented over five years until September, 2006.   It entails three major types of interventions – grants, training and technical assistance.   The program will be implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), in cooperation with Management Systems International (MSI) and the International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF).

2. *Background*: From November 26 to December 15, 2001, AED-MSI carried out an initial needs assessment of the general human rights environment in Bangladesh, and of the human rights NGO community in particular, and prepared the attached paper.

3. *The context*: Bangladesh is still struggling to overcome its long authoritarian past. The flaws in the human rights environment in Bangladesh are relatively well known: laws are inadequate; enforcement of good laws is poor; some agents of the state actively abuse rights; and few individuals are aware of their rights or are in a position to defend them. Citizens tend to fear the state and to seek redress on an individual or case-by-case basis, rather than as groups or on a systemic basis. A broad range of socio-political and economic interests are arrayed against the reform of laws and their enforcement, either overall or with regard to particular rights issues, and they appear to be more linked together than interests supporting human rights. Thus, the flaws are systemic.

4. *Problems:*   A number of limitations currently characterize the HR community.   We found little evidence of strategies for *systemically* improving the environment for human rights. Groups seem to be particularly averse to developing strategies that acknowledge the systemic role of the state in human rights violations. One major problem is thus a failure to integrate activities into larger strategies, and so activities overall are weakly linked together.   Activities fall primarily into the categories of court actions and grassroots awareness programs.   Most HR groups are service-delivery oriented and focused on individuals and individual cases.   In isolation most of these activities lack cumulative impact, and may even be unconstructive, as failure to improve laws and enforcement of laws can lead to citizen frustration and sometimes extra-legal activity.

The collection and use of information is an important, related problem area. Most groups do not collect information in ways that enable the development of effective strategies to fight human rights abuses.   The team did not generally encounter "systems analysis," or other holistic methods being applied to analyze the human rights environment.   In particular, most HR groups don't analyze the environment in terms of the interests for and against reform.   Rather, most groups articulate a narrow analysis of the roots of HR problems in Bangladesh, citing individual

laws, or citizens' attitudes. Groups appear reluctant to acknowledge that some portion of rights violations in Bangladesh are the product of state-sponsored activities.

5. *Opportunities:* The assessment team did identify some opportunities for improving the human rights environment. HR NGOs, the media and the higher judiciary represent the core constituency for promoting human rights awareness and reforms in Bangladesh. At the present time, the HR NGOs, the media and the higher judiciary are starting to be linked together more closely. Journalists and the print media increasingly represent critical allies for human rights organizations. Some high court judges are progressive, and the high courts are relatively more independent of the executive than most other branches of government. Public interest litigation therefore holds potential for supporting reform. A number of donor projects are underway that could strengthen the human rights environment both at national and local levels. The team found a number of positive features within the HR community. Bangladesh is notable for its number of human rights programs. And, while political and personal differences impede cooperation within the community, some coalitions already exist within the HR community. The area of trafficking in women and children is already characterized by important links among groups.

6. *Project strategies:* Human rights issues that the project will address cluster into four broad categories: women's rights; child labor; anti-trafficking; and 'other.' A common element of 'other' is the role of the state, or the political parties in human rights violations. A central thrust of AED's project strategy is to help HR organizations in Bangladesh find ways to *aggregate* their efforts in strategic ways. Focusing the AED Project on "aggregation of efforts" means: gaining a holistic picture of the human rights environment and tracking changes; developing strategies that will have systemic effects; weaving activities into strategies to serve larger goals; and building constituencies that put power behind the pursuit of the goal. To accomplish this strategic aggregation, AED will utilize a series of organizing principals including: (i) incrementalism, (ii) participatory decision making, (iii) using systems approaches to analyze problems, (iv) aggregating data, and (v) building constituencies for reform.

7. *Expected results***:** Most of the "results" expected in years one and two initially will show up as a series of activities. Important activities include: (i) the award of a first set of grants, (ii) commissioning research, including various polls and surveys, (iii) carefully designed participant training and travel, and (iv) use of systems analysis to look at the root causes of HR violations. By the third or fourth year, "activities" will evolve into "results," and become more strategic.

8. *Workplan:* The focus in year one will be on strategic planning, research, and getting groups to begin working together more effectively. Key mechanisms will include: (i) convening one or more facilitated workshops, (ii) a hands-on grant program that targets the key issue areas and builds potential grantees' capacity, (iii) supporting the development of a series of micro-coalitions, and (iv) encouraging the establishment of a small number of issue-based task forces.

I.   Introduction

A.   Summary of the Project

This program supports USAID/Bangladesh's Intermediate Result 9.3:   more effective civil society advocacy of human rights.   The long-range goal of the program is to establish an environment that respects rights and protects vulnerable groups from rights violations.   The more modest and immediate objective is to help civil society coalitions and human rights organizations develop more effective strategies to reduce human rights abuses and influence public policies on human rights issues.   The program is expected to be implemented over five years, from September 28, 2001, to September 27, 2006.   It entails three major types of interventions – grants, training and technical assistance.   The program will be implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), in cooperation with Management Systems International (MSI) and the International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF).   It is funded by a cooperative agreement (an associate award) under the Global Civil Society Strengthening Project leader cooperative agreement.

B.   Structure of the document

From November 26 to December 15, 2001, AED-MSI carried out an initial needs assessment of the general human rights environment in Bangladesh, and of the human rights NGO community in particular.   The assessment was conducted by W. Thomas Kelly, the Chief of Party (MSI); Gwendolyn G. Bevis, Senior Technical Advisor for the Global Civil Society Strengthening Project (AED), and David A. Garner, consultant (AED).   The team met with approximately 45 individuals from approximately 20 organizations (see Annex B), and conducted a focus group with four organizations in Dhaka.   Most of the meetings were held in Dhaka, but the team was also able to travel to Jessore to meet with several organizations concerned with human rights.

The needs assessment has enabled AED-MSI to refine its proposal for the project.   Section II of this document presents the key findings and conclusions of the assessment team.   Section III lays out a strategy for the project that follows from the findings. Section IV outlines expected results for year one of the project.   Section V presents AED's draft workplan and draft detailed implementation plan for year one, together with a summary chart outlining possible activities for year two.

II.   Initial Needs Assessment: Findings and Conclusions

A.   Introduction

Bangladesh is notable for the *number* of its human rights programs. Within a three-week period, for example, the assessment team heard of four or five major rights-related seminars in Dhaka; read dozens of reports of human rights violations in the daily newspapers; and encountered several human rights organizations that individually can call upon hundreds of lawyers to provide legal aid, have filed thousands of cases, and appear to have trained thousands of

Bangladeshis in rights' issues.[1] These numbers are *not* simply a reflection of Bangladesh's population. The rights community in the Philippines, for example, can call upon far fewer lawyers as a proportion of its population than Bangladesh. Despite the number of programs and people involved, however, we found little evidence of strategies for systemically improving the environment for human rights. This dearth may be a reflection of the many deeply embedded challenges that confront the Human Rights community. At the same it suggests a central thrust of AED's project strategy, which is to help HR organizations in Bangladesh find ways to *aggregate* their efforts in strategic ways over the life of the project. Clearly, increasing the quantity of human rights activities in Bangladesh will not be enough to effect systemic change. Nor will it suffice to concentrate on improving the quality of service delivery. If systemic change is to occur, human rights supporters need to coordinate and target their efforts more carefully than they have in the past. Even then, we should state explicitly that, given the polarized nature of political life in Bangladesh, the possibility of much systemic change within the timeframe of this project represents a substantial challenge.

This section reviews the assessment findings, beginning with a brief review of what the team considers to be significant barriers and opportunities in the wider social, political, and economic environment for human rights in general and the AED project in particular. We also include a brief discussion of the key substantive issues or types of human rights abuses in Bangladesh that the project will focus on. The second subsection summarizes the assessment team's findings with respect to needs *within* the human rights community. The initial needs assessment validated a number of the central suppositions in AED/MSI's original proposal, and refined or added others.

B. Environment for human rights in Bangladesh: barriers and opportunities

1. Institutions and interests

The flaws in the human rights environment in Bangladesh are relatively well known and understood, in a broad sense, by human rights activists. For example:

- Laws are inadequate, or in some cases even facilitate the abuse of rights (e.g. the Public Safety Act of 2000, the Special Powers Act of 1974, and a Penal Code from the 19th century which permits the shackling of prisoners);

- Enforcement of good laws is poor, and some agents of the state actively abuse rights (as illustrated by torture in police custody); and

- Few individuals are aware of their rights or in a position to defend them.

Bangladesh is still struggling to overcome its long authoritarian past. The particular nature of that past includes a long experience with a powerful, well-organized colonial state, followed by authoritarian military regimes. This has given overwelming power to those instruments of the

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[1] See the Annual Report of the well-respected and well-run rights organization BLAST, or Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, for an illustration of this phenomenon.

state that exercise control over citizens, especially the bureaucracy and military, rather than those that provide services, or those that should channel citizen input to the policy process. For example, Parliament is dysfunctional as far as the human rights community is concerned. The opposition, regardless of party, has tended to boycott the proceedings, and there is no standing human rights committee. By the same token, citizens – both ordinary and the elite – tend to fear the state and to seek redress on an individual or case-by-case basis, rather than as groups or on a systemic basis. The assessment reinforced the team's judgments that these flaws are systemic.

Moreover, the team's research suggests that a broad range of socio-political and economic interests are arrayed against the reform of laws and their enforcement, either overall or with regard to particular rights issues. These generally appear to be more powerful and more entrenched than those that support human rights. They are also likely to be more strategically linked together through a web of mutually reinforcing self-interest compared to those that support human rights. At the local level, for example, some local elites may be linked together in a series of political and economic relationships, giving them substantial control over most of the levers of power, authority, and capital in a community, either formally or informally. In such communities, no healthy sense of checks and balances exists among competing interest groups, making the protection and expansion of rights extremely challenging. This is not to imply that only or all elites abuse human rights, or that only elites should be held accountable. Particularly with regard to domestic violence, abuses occur at all socio-economic strata. The point is that entrenched and powerful interests in preserving an environment that does not punish rights abuses (or other violations of the law), or selectively punishes abuses, represent a critical barrier to addressing individual cases at all socio-economic levels.

Amongst those interested actively in protecting and expanding human rights, important connections are starting to exist between HR NGOs, the media and the higher judiciary. These three groups represent the core constituency for promoting human rights awareness and reforms in Bangladesh. The team was struck by the extent to which journalists and the print media represent critical allies for human rights organizations. HR groups explicitly and frequently mentioned reporters and editors as important allies. Reports on abuses appear frequently, in national and local, English and Bangla papers, and human rights groups often appear to rely on, or react to, those reports in their own activities. High court justices clearly are another important set of allies mentioned by HR groups. Various other groups have intermittent interests in human rights issues and might be important allies, like social/economic development organizations, but most HR groups do not appear to have significant links to them. We therefore suspect that the number of groups actively supporting human rights is less than those with interests against reform, and that HR-supporting groups are probably weaker, both individually, and in terms of the current linkages that exist among them.

Along with the obstacles, the assessment team did identify some opportunities for improving the human rights environment. The traditional environment in rural areas, for example, is changing through migration into the larger cities, as well as through economic changes that are spreading across Bangladesh. We have already mentioned how journalists and the print media increasingly represent critical allies for human rights organizations. To some degree, investigative reporting is on the rise, although human rights reporting is not very analytical, and follow-up is weak. At least some high court judges are proactive and/or progressive in the area of human rights, and the

high courts are relatively more independent of the executive than most other branches of government. Because of this, public interest litigation holds potential for supporting reform, although court delay and other problems may limit its effectiveness.

Other developments in government may be significant: a couple of key informants hypothesized that the new BNP government is under pressure to improve the law and order situation because of the fate of the previous (Awami League) government, which many people believe was voted out because of the deterioration in law and order in Bangladesh. The new government has promised that a Human Rights Commission and an Ombudsman's office will be established, although their independence and level of resources are currently unknown (and their establishment is not assured). By contrast, another informant suggested that, because it is new, the BNP government will not be willing to approve NGO activities that criticize its human rights performance for at least one year.

2. Other donors

Finally, with respect to the environment for human rights, a number of donor projects are currently underway or beginning that could be leveraged by the project in ways that strengthen the human rights environment at both national and local levels.

- World Bank: A major project aimed at judicial reform is underway. Among its components are access to justice, legal aid services and legal literacy. Although funding exists for government-sanctioned legal aid at the local level, such funding has not been used in many localities. Pending a long-term program to revitalize this service, the Bank is supporting the activities of BLAST in a number of localities to establish a model.

  The Bank's program is primarily aimed at improving the efficiency and administrative capacity of the judicial system and does not deal with human rights issues as a specific focus. Nevertheless, the effort presents an opportunity for the project to plug in selected human rights problems such as those connected with redress for victims. Additionally, the AED project might encourage a small group of public interest litigation practitioners to cooperate with the Bank project in developing a more streamlined process for handling such cases.

- National Democratic Institute (NDI): A major component of recent NDI activities has been completed with the conclusion of national elections and the installation of a new government. This provides an opportunity for the AED project and NDI to collaborate in addressing a number of human rights issues, particularly at the local level. There is a substantial degree of overlap in terms of individuals who work with NDI and are also on the staff of NGOs, both those specifically focused on human rights and those for whom human rights is more a peripheral activity. NDI can contribute to project programming by identifying any political affiliations of potential grantees and by serving as an unofficial channel for distribution of advocacy materials.

- Associates in Rural Development (ARD): ARD recently launched a local government project with USAID funding, which is also aimed at promoting advocacy at the local level. ARD's advocacy procedures as well as the methodologies they use in developing policy

dialogues will almost surely be relevant to similar components of our project. For example, we might attempt to work out the modalities and develop materials which ARD could use as an insert into its local government advocacy training exercises. At a minimum we expect to profit from the ARD project by piggybacking on their analyses of individual and institutional actors at the local level in those geographic areas in which they will work.

- American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS): ACILS is already in the process of forming human rights interest groups as a part of its overall work with women in the garment workers group. There could be fledgling potential NGOs in this area which would bring new social groups to the community of human rights organizations. This in itself is an attractive possibility in that the bulk of the highly visible human rights NGOs have a legal approach, while substantial public and media attention is now being paid to women in the work force. ACILS might be encouraged to work with the project in stimulating lecturers/facilitators at its education centers to form a strategic alliance focusing on human rights and the workplace.

- DANIDA: The team has found that DANIDA is perceived by the human rights NGO community as first among equals in the bilateral donor community. We also believe there is validity to this perception and consequently have treated DANIDA to separate consideration in Annex C.

- United Nations Development Program (UNDP): UNDP, along with some bilateral donors, is supporting the development of an official Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh, and (together with DANIDA) the creation of a national Ombudsman. The efforts began under the previous government and, particularly in the case of the Commission, continues to maintain a high profile under the new government. Although laws creating the institutions have been drafted and are at the cabinet level, various pressures to reduce their independence and/or power have resulted in substantial delays in finalization. To monitor progress and promote the concept of a Human Rights Commission, UNDP established a project office, Institutional Development of Human Rights in Bangladesh, attached to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. While primarily responsible for shepherding the Commission law through the legislative and bureaucratic processes, this unit has also embarked on human rights training of senior police officers. Donors and the human rights community have indicated that the strongest opposition to an independent and empowered national human rights commission comes from this quarter. So the establishment of the Human Rights Commission is not assured, and most Bangladesh HR NGOs would in any case reserve judgment as to its impact until the actual legislation is finalized.

- Other Donors: There are many other donors (British Aid, Norad, ActionAid, etc.) who are operating in various human rights sectors with violence against women being among the most significant (see the next subsection). Many of the interventions support victims services. However, a recently begun initiative of British aid to establish a police training academy is worthy of note. This effort addresses a major issue highlighted by most of the human rights NGOs and will be monitored closely. It may possibly provide opportunities for direct project involvement such as instructional materials development or NGO-police

interaction through workshops, etc. An ICITAP project through the US Department of Justice is also involved in police training.

3. Key human rights issues

The initial USAID RFA identified a number of human rights issues that the project might address. The team sought to validate those ideas. These broadly cluster into four categories:

- Women's rights: The team found that a number of very competent groups are working in the area of violence against women (VAW). This seems to be an issue that elicits cooperation across the human rights community, and perhaps even across party lines. The proportion of women in Bangladesh who are victimized indicates that this issue is important and resonates with large sections of the population.

- Child labor: AED/MSI will conduct a specific needs assessment addressed at child labor.[2] At this point we assume that this will also be an important focus area, provided funds are available.

- Anti-trafficking of women and children: This is another issue area that seems to elicit broad cooperation. The USAID mission appears already to have accomplished a great deal in this area in terms of bringing interested parties together to strategize on the issue. The AED project may be able to leverage existing efforts in this area.

- Other: The assessment team repeatedly heard other human rights issues put forward as important. Informants used such phrases as: "torture in police custody," "state-sponsored violations of human rights," "fear of state administration," "people cannot go to the state for redress," "personal security," "lack of confidence in law-enforcing agencies and judicial administration," "terrorism," and "the criminalization of politics." A common element of all these expressions is the role of the state, or of aspirants to state power (i.e. the political parties), in human rights violations.[3]

C. The community of human rights organizations

The team found a number of positive features of the human rights community that were not reflected in AED's original proposal. Foremost, while political and personal differences *do* impede cooperation within the community, *some coalitions* that include HR groups *already exist*. Examples include the Governance Coalition (supported by ActionAid), the Nagorik Samaj coalition on governance, and the coalition formed to monitor the recent elections. There are also

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[2] A consultant from the International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF) is scheduled to come to Bangladesh between April and June 2002 to conduct a formal needs assessment and work with interested groups on their strategies and programs in this area.

[3] For documentation of these issues, see in particular M. Rashiduzzaman, "Bangladesh in 2000", *Asian Survey* 41:1 (January/February 2001), pp. 122-130, and Ain o Salish Kendro, *Human Rights in Bangladesh 2000*.

a number of "micro" or "proto" coalitions of HR groups. Small sets of HR groups share lawyers or documentation, or refer cases to each other. Some cooperate in the area of awareness programs for women. The area of trafficking in women and children appears to be characterized by a number of links among groups. "Shongoti" is a very interesting example of a coalition encompassing a broad range and number of group working on one very specific issue. More than sixty organizations, including lawyers' groups, women's groups, and organizations of sex workers themselves, have come together to protest the violent eviction of hundreds of prostitutes and their children from brothels near Dhaka, without rehabilitation or compensation. They have used a variety of means to publicize this event and protect its victims, including filing court cases, various public demonstrations, lobbying, documentation and public announcements. During its assessment, the team also came across examples of culturally sophisticated techniques for developing awareness, as well as creatively designed surveys for ascertaining information about rights.

At the same time the team was struck by a number of limitations across the HR community. The central theme is a failure to integrate activities into larger strategies. In the first place, while many of the HR groups the team encountered are collecting information on human rights abuses, and some are doing surveys, most groups don't collect that information in ways that enable the development of effective strategies to fight human rights abuses.

- The story of the campaign against the brothel evictions, for example, is one of a relatively comprehensive and creative rights campaign, yet it has not been analyzed in a way that teases out the significant constructive and unsuccessful aspects, and disseminates those lessons.

- Scientific polling and attitude surveys, which could be vital to the formation of broad constituencies for reform as well as for the tracking of abuses, are not being done in any systematic manner. Democracywatch, for example, conducted an interesting survey on sexual harassment in the workplace, but did not repeat it and thus gather trend data. Neither did it analyze it in ways that linked the results to related activities.

- A number of groups collect newspaper clippings on human rights violations, but do not appear to do more than count different types of abuses and announce the totals. Several groups appear to be collecting the same information from essentially the same sources, for the same purposes, suggesting some redundancy of efforts.

The team did not encounter any "systems analysis," or other holistic methods, being applied by groups to analyze the human rights environment. In particular, most HR groups don't seem to analyze the human rights environment in terms of the interests for and against reform, at least when it comes to designing their own strategies. Most groups articulate a narrow analysis of the roots of HR problems in Bangladesh, citing individual laws, or citizens' attitudes.[4] Groups appear reluctant or unable to acknowledge that some portion of rights violations in Bangladesh are the product of state-sponsored activities. Such a diagnosis may be highly sensitive, but avoiding it limits strategies to deal with violations.

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[4] This is not always true with regard to women's issues, where groups do bring in socio-economic-cultural issues. And in the area of trafficking, groups are now starting to carry out 'systems analyses' of the problems.

Beyond documentation, activities overall are weakly linked together. Activities fall primarily into the categories of court actions and grassroots awareness programs. Most HR groups are thus service-delivery oriented and focused on individuals and individual cases. As just indicated, groups seem to be particularly averse to developing strategies that acknowledge the systemic role of the state in human rights violations.

Whatever the causes, in isolation most of these activities lack cumulative impact, and may even be unconstructive. For example, improved awareness in the absence of improved laws and enforcement of laws can lead to citizen frustration and sometimes extra-legal activity. Similarly, publicizing numerous individual accounts of human rights violations and bald numbers of human rights violations without analysis and/or information about how to effect change may produce cynicism or numbness. Legal aid without the transfer of skills to non-lawyers reinforces dependence. Training paralegals who are not attached to any pre-existing organization may dissipate that expertise. Lobbying of legislators without the clear backing of large numbers of citizens and/or without careful research trivializes and weakens advocacy efforts.

III. Project Strategy

A principal component of the AED Project's strategy is to focus on "aggregation of efforts." What does this mean? The aggregation of the human rights community's efforts has several interrelated aspects:

- Gaining a holistic picture of the human rights environment, or the environment for a given human rights issue, and tracking changes.

- Developing strategies – by identifying, targeting and prioritizing changes that will have systemic effects, and then weaving activities into the strategy to serve larger goals; and

- Building constituencies that put power behind the pursuit of the goal, including connecting the relatively vast population of victims and potential victims to the relatively small population of activists and professionals involved in human rights.

As the graphic below illustrates, these foci are mutually reinforcing. A holistic assessment of the human rights environment enables comprehensive strategies and prioritization of activities. Those activities then provide further information to refine assessments and strategies. Where the process is participatory, it should also draw in ever larger numbers of allies and constituents.

Figure 1: Process Overview
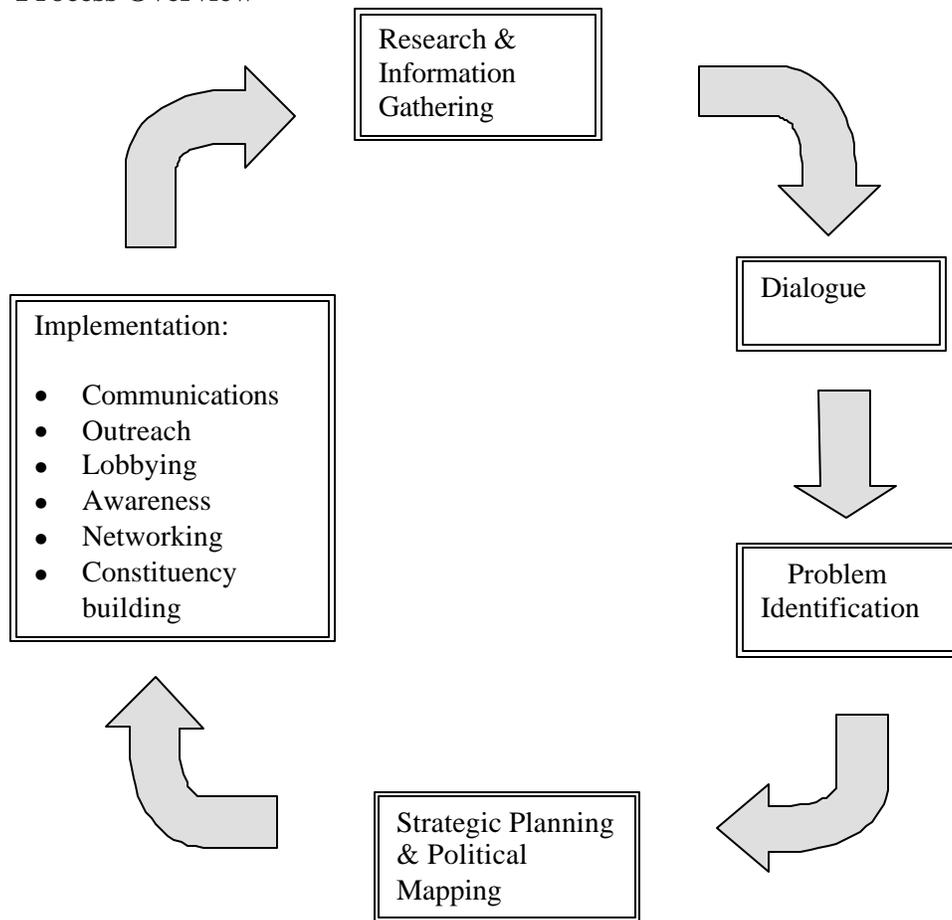
To accomplish this strategic aggregation, AED will utilize a series of organizing principals, including the following:

- Incrementalism. As AED starts working with the Human Rights community in Bangladesh, it brings no comprehensive blueprint for the human rights community's future actions. In a similar manner, the community itself articulates no overarching vision for what things might look like after five or ten years. Instead, AED is putting in place a series of processes to help the HR community reach strategic decisions. Decisions relating to the project will be made incrementally, as groups and organizations learn what works, and build on experience and successes. The HR community can only move forward as fast as it wants to.

- Participatory Decision Making. The evolution of the project will be the product of a set of participatory processes. These will include individual and group meetings with human rights groups and other stakeholders to solicit inputs on Project design. It will also include an annual Action Planning Workshop, the development of task forces in key

issues areas, and close contact between project staff and the human rights community throughout the life of the project.

- Using Systems Approaches to Analyze Problems. Holistic analyses should facilitate the development of comprehensive and more effective strategies for improving the environment for human rights in Bangladesh. AED will therefore encourage stakeholders to conduct "systems analyses," that both disaggregate and inter-relate the pieces of the human rights puzzle with which they are working.[5] A political mapping exercise, for example, would identify potential allies of human rights groups as well as opponents of human rights reforms, and assess their relative strengths and interconnections. This in turn would suggest possible strategies for the HR community. Building upon such analytical models, the HR community can seek ways to strengthen relationships among allies, or strategically weaken relationships among potential human rights abusers.

- Aggregating Data. Human rights groups across Bangladesh devote relatively little effort to aggregating meaningfully the data that is being collected, or to synthesizing it and applying it to political action strategies. Thus a compelling organizing principal for AED over the life of the project will be to seek ways to help the HR community find ways to better aggregate data about the HR situation. This will involves generating better base-line data about human rights and tracking trends or discerning patterns; using data to formulate strategies; and evaluating impact. Groups that are collecting pieces of information about a problem will be encouraged to link their information with other groups and organizations, to better assess overall problems. To do this, the project can support mechanisms such as networks, shared databases, and a regular Human Rights Conference.

- Building Constituencies for Reform. Much of the work that the individual groups working on human rights do today involves direct delivery of services. This is vital and important work, and it must continue. At the same time, it is also important to build bigger constituencies for reform of the underlying problems that lead to human rights violations. Thus, AED will focus upon efforts that lead to the development of larger and more powerful constituencies for reforms. As Bangladesh moves away from its authoritarian past, and free elections and a free press increasingly become the norm, relationships between the core constituencies interested in human rights can be strengthened and expanded. Other groups – for example, perhaps the social and economic development NGOs – could also be linked more closely to the primary core group of human rights supporters, so that over time a larger more powerful community is formed. Collectively, such coalitions can begin to work together to lobby for broader and more balanced social, political and economic development strategies, and the human rights that underpin such development. Building constituencies for reform involves making human rights activities more meaningful for the constituents of human rights group, as well as potential victims of abuse. Such constituencies, in turn, need to link back to policy makers.

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[5] Stakeholders working with trafficking, for example, are already well along in conducting a 'systems analysis' of the components of trafficking. This work suggests an important model that other groups can use to look at problems relating to other aspects of Human Rights in Bangladesh.

To clarify the organizational structures through which AED will work, the assessment team has prepared a draft organigram that links together the 'project,' which is directly under AED's operational control, with the 'program' that represents a possible organizational structure for the HR community in Bangladesh.

Figure 2: USAID's Support for Bangladesh's Human Rights Programs
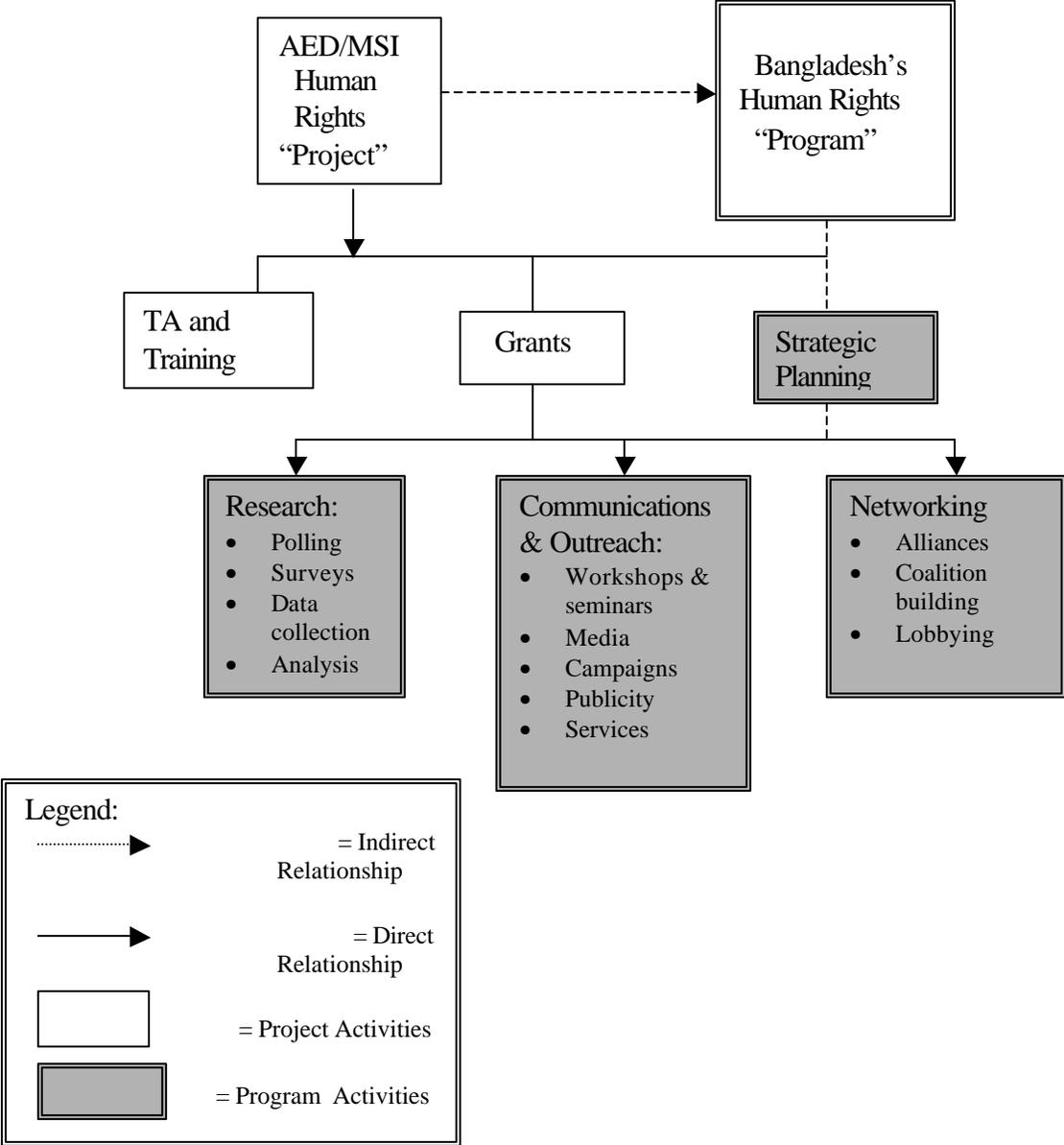
IV.   Expected Results

Achievement of the goal of establishing an environment that respects rights and protects vulnerable groups from rights violations entails institutionalizing a set of conditions, including new laws that protect rights; adequate implementation of such laws; wider awareness of laws and of the importance of respect for human rights by decision makers, state officials, and citizens; a greater sense of efficacy on the part of citizens with respect to defending their rights and adequate channels for pursuing them; more extensive monitoring and reporting on human rights violations; and adequate treatment services for victims of human rights violations.   The project will help Bangladesh make progress toward meeting these conditions, but is insufficient on its own for meeting them.

The objectives of this project are the conditions that USAID and AED/MSI hope to have in place by the end of the project.   They are tied explicitly to I.R. 3: More Effective Advocacy of Human Rights.   We anticipate that more advocacy will be carried out by human rights groups working on selected issues, and by other human rights groups receiving capacity-building assistance.   We also anticipate that advocacy is of a better quality on selected issues, as well as on the issues addressed by groups outside the issue foci.   Better advocacy includes stronger policy formulation; more thorough analysis of stakeholder interests; better and more cooperative planning of advocacy action; more extensive and frequent networking; better coalition formation; stronger outreach to citizens, media, and decision makers; and better monitoring of advocacy efforts to improve campaigns.

As a result of more effective advocacy, we expect to see processes of change underway in the selected issue areas, such as violence against women.   We also expect to see some processes of change underway in areas addressed by human rights groups outside the issue foci that that have received multiple grants and significant training and/or technical assistance (TA).   Change processes might include more media coverage of human rights issues, more support from Members of Parliament (MPs) for key changes, and senior civil servants supporting changes. While highly desirable, changes in policies are likely to take more than five years, and will depend on factors beyond the control of this project.   We will, however, track any changes in policies.

In order to achieve the project objectives, the team recommends a focus on the following results over the life of the project:[6]

- Constituencies are built that pursue the project's objectives; linkages among HR NGOs, the media and higher judiciary are strengthened; these groups in turn develop stronger and broader links to social/economic development organizations and other potential allies, so that the relatively small population of human rights activists is increasingly connected with the larger population.

- Coalitions begin to lobby for reform of the underlying problems that lead to human rights violations;   lobbying begins to connect human rights issues to broader social, political

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[6] AED will submit its performance monitoring plan in early April 2002. This will further specify key project results, as well as indicators for them, and data collection plans.

and economic development strategies; lobbying is more effective; lobbying is, as per the preceding point, backed by larger numbers of citizens.

- Increasingly sophisticated techniques for developing awareness about HR issues are employed, so that a larger proportion of the general population of Bangladesh is aware of their rights and the means for defending them, and of the sources of rights violations.

- Increasingly sound techniques are used to ascertain information about rights abuses, so that human rights strategies are more effective.

- Public interest litigation is used more systematically.

- The quality of investigative reporting continues to improve, with human rights reporting more analytical, with improved follow-up.

In first years of the project, as this assessment has argued, the focus should be on strategic planning, research, and getting groups to begin working together more effectively. Shorter term results would therefore include better information collection, including better baseline data about human rights abuses, impact data, and trend data; the aggregation of data; the use of holistic methods of analyzing the human rights environment, including examination of the state's role; and the application of such analyses to political action strategies, such that human rights groups become more strategic. They should also include increasing the number of micro or proto coalitions of human rights groups.

Most of the 'results' expected in years 1 and 2 initially will show up as a series of activities. By years 3 and 4, however, activities will begin to evolve into 'results.' Important activities that will occur during years 1 and 2 include:

1. The award of an initial set (or possibly two sets) of grants.

2. Commissioning of various polls and surveys to chart more accurately attitudes and perceptions of the general population of Bangladesh about human rights issues. Such data will help the HR community make more strategic decisions about future directions.

3. Carefully designed participant training and travel will expose HR leaders to the experience of other nearby countries. Traveling together should facilitate communications and planning within the HR leadership community within Bangladesh.

4. Use of systems analysis to look analytically at the root causes of HR violations.

5. Identification of one or more key issues around which significant parts of the HR community can coalesce. Such issues can become a test case for learning certain methodologies involving communal political action, constituency mobilization, etc.

6. Preliminary development of a small number of task forces to address key issues of importance to the HR community.

Most of the first and second years' "results" primarily will be a learning experience for the project and the larger HR community. Results can be measured in terms of what is learned by the community, more than by what changes actually happen on the ground. As lessons are learned, however, these will be incorporated into the planning of the projects, grantees, and other groups in contact with the project, via a feedback loop. Thus, over time project activities will become more strategic, and results will become more interesting.

V. Workplan

The focus in year one will be on strategic planning, research, and getting groups to begin working together more effectively. Key mechanisms that will be utilized by the project will include:

- Facilitated workshops. AED will convene a series of facilitated workshops from time to time, where HR activists and other stakeholders can come together in a relatively neutral environment to define priorities and strategies. AED's role in such workshops typically will be to create the holding environment where various parties can come together, and to facilitate their thinking and deliberations about future possible strategies.

- A hands-on grant program. The selection procedure for the grant program will have two stages. First, NGOs submit a preliminary application. AED project staff will select the best proposals for further development. The selected preliminary applications will be submitted to USAID for approval. AED will then assist the selected organizations in developing results-oriented applications which, once ready, will be submitted to a selection committee for acceptance. Once accepted by the selection committee, final applications will be submitted to USAID for approval. This two-step process, involving significant amounts of Project staff interaction with prospective grantees, yields a number of benefits. It facilitates the achievement of Project results, through the refining and coordinating of grants. It also allows for the provision of technical assistance that is closely tailored to the needs of the groups as the grant program unfolds.

- Micro-coalitions. In a relatively short period of time, AED expects to be working with a number of micro-coalitions.[7] These will probably be a combination of issue-based groups and other organizations that feel they can work together on particular advocacy or other human rights effort, at local and/or national levels. AED will focus upon supporting[8] and facilitating the development of a series of issue-oriented micro-coalitions, rather than trying to create a giant coalition of human rights organizations that seeks to addresses all possible issues and opportunities.

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[7] The assessment team learned that several smaller clusters of HR groups currently are working and collaborating together. Such collaboration already represents at least proto-coalitions. We will encourage this development, starting within the first few months of the project.

[8] How these micro-coalitions will be funded will be determined as grant applications are received and the micro-coalitions emerge.

- Issue-based Task Forces. Ideally the Human Rights community over time will organize itself into national "task forces" in issue areas where they think progress can be made to advance human rights in the country. Membership would be entirely voluntary, and their maintenance will ultimately depend upon the presence of dedicated activists from the human rights community who believe the task forces have value. Most of the energy of each Task Force should come from a participatory decision-making process.

The role of such task forces would be to link human rights and other groups working in a given issue area. Among other things, these task forces would consider how HR groups *as a community* can strategize on particular issues, that is, develop strategies for tackling the issues that reach beyond a single group's knowledge and capacity. Among other things, they could consider how key issues can be framed in strategic ways to achieve political traction in the competition for ideas. They could also identify research needs, carry out political mapping, organize lobbying, facilitate the sharing of information on rights abuses, rights programs (what works and what doesn't), and other matters of common concern and value. In essence, they would help to aggregate efforts in a way that promotes local ownership.

The project will seek to facilitate the emergence of a small number of task forces focused on the issues addressed by the project. One such task force would probably address the rights of women; a second might address the rights of children (a similar body already exists in the area of anti-trafficking, facilitated by a USAID officer). Other task forces would be encouraged based on the priorities of the community, as these are defined and articulated in workshops and other venues. They might grow out of micro coalitions or other existing networks, and/or from grantees' efforts. The project would begin to explore this idea in year one, anticipating the emergence of one or more task forces in year two. Over time, we would hope that the issue-oriented task forces would lead to the establishment of a "task force of task forces," composed of the leaders of individual issue-based Task Forces. It will take some time for such a broad body to emerge, but if it does, it will help the HR community and the project to decide which issues are key, and will help link together work in disparate issue areas. It would serve to synthesize or coordinate efforts of the various individual task forces, to the extent that this proves appropriate. The project could provide funding to these task forces through grants to an organization that is represented on the task force that has applied to the grant program, or through other funding arrangements, e.g. a newly created body that applies to the grant program.

On the following two pages we present the key activities of years one and two, in tabular form.

Table 1: AED Human Rights Project, Year 1, Key Activities

Year 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Months	O N D	J F M	A M J	J A S
1. AED start-up 2. APS design 3. APS issuance & bidders' conference 4. Grants & Awards	[1............	..............] [2......]	[3] [4..........	 ...]
5. Action Planning Workshop				[5]
6. ILRF			[6]	
7. Participant Training				[7]
8. Other Training Activities			[8..........	....

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Key:
[x]   = discrete event or activity
[x.....]  = continuing or intermittent activity
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Notes on activities:

[1]   **Start-up Activities:** These include posting of the Chief of Party, location and set-up of office and residence, hiring and training of local staff, and initial needs assessment.

[2]   **Annual Program Statement:** Initial design, discussion with USAID, and submission of final version.

[3]   **Bidders Conference:** Launches grant program.

[4]   **Grants & Awards Process:** This is a two-step process. See Implementation Plan for details.

[5]   **Action Planning Workshop:** Participatory workshop to help grantees and wider human rights community plan and coordinate activities. Should lead to formation of issue-specific task forces.

[6]   **An ILRF** consultant will come to Bangladesh in the early stages of the first grant cycle.

[7]   **Participant Training**: This will be designed with input from USAID, grantees, the planning workshop, and task forces.

[8]   **Other Training Activities** will commence in the third quarter. Some training will involve work with NGOs to help shape their proposals and/or prepare for grant implementation. Some training will be one-on-one. Other training will involve work with several NGOs in areas such as accounting, audits, grant preparation, communications, surveys, polling, lobbying, coalition building, etc.

Table 2: AED Human Rights Project, Year 2, Key Activities

Year 2	Quarter 5	Quarter 6	Quarter 7	Quarter 8
Months	O N D	J F M	A M J	J A S
1. Strategic Planning Workshop 2. RFA design 3. RFA issuance 4. Grants & Awards		[1] [2…….]	[3] [4……...	….]
5. Human Rights Conference				[5]
6. Task Forces	[6… … …	… … … …	……………....	……………]
7. ILRF			[7]	
8. Participant Training		[8]		[8]
9. Other training	[9……….....	………………...	…………….…	……………]
10. Internship Program	[10……….......	…………..........	…………….…	……………]

Notes on activities:

[1]   **Strategic Planning Workshop**: Interested Human Rights NGOs will assemble to discuss the general state of the Human Rights programs, and to prepare for the second round of grants.

[2]   **APS design:** The HR community will contribute to the design of the 2nd APS.

[3]   **The 2nd APS** will be issued early in the 7th Quarter.

[4]   **Grants & Awards** will be handled through a two step process. The 1st phase will require a concept paper. For responsive concept papers, AED program staff and other interested stakeholders will work together to help to shape proposals. The various HR Task Forces will contribute to this process.

[5]   **Human Rights Conference:** Following the 2nd round of grants awards, the HR community with support from AED will host a national conference on Human Rights in Bangladesh.

[6]   **Task Forces:** Rights Task Forces addressing 'vertical issues' such as Women, Children, and other categories will begin to form.

[7]   **ILRF:** An ILRF consultant will come to Bangladesh during the 2nd grants award cycle to work with prospective bidders to help shape and focus proposals.

[8]   **Participant Training:** Two additional major participant training events are scheduled for the 2nd Year.

[9]   **Other Training Activities** will continue through the 2nd year. Some will involve direct TA or training work to help individual NGOs prepare their grant requests. By the 2nd year, more training will be focused on working with groups of NGOs to help to shape overall HR messages, and outreach techniques.

[10]   **Internship program:** Starting in the 5th Quarter, the project will put in place an internship program, to rotate staff from interested HR groups through the AED offices.

Table 3: AED Human Rights Project, Year 1, Implementation Plan

Activity Description	Audience	Schedule	Responsible	Expected Outcomes
1. AED Start up	AED, AID, HR community	By mid-April	COP	Office rented, staff recruited and trained, telecommunications and computer systems in place.
2. APS discussed with USAID and finalized, including selection criteria, eligibility guidelines, and selection process.	USAID	early April	COP, program staff	RFA approved by USAID
3. Bidder's Conference	HR stakeholders	April	COP, program staff	Bidder's conference held; general guidance provided concerning 1st round of grants
4. Organize ILRF consultant's visit	HR NGOs	April	AED/W	Child labor assessment conducted, strategy developed
5. Solicit applications: APS publicized and distributed, hold informational meetings	HR NGOs	April-May	COP, program staff	Applications received
6. Establish Grants appraisal Committee: recruit members, get approval from USAID, orient members to selection criteria, guidelines, and USAID results framework, train in program appraisal.	Selection committee	April	COP, program staff	Committee of approximately 7 prominent leaders from business, media, universities, and NGO community formed.
7. Grant awards, Phase I: Appraise concept papers; determine top 10 – 15; present to USAID with supporting documentation	HR NGOs	May	COP, program staff	Top 10 – 15 concept papers identified, for further action under Phase II; bidders so advised.
8. Prepare PMP	USAID	early April	MSI/AED Washington staff with COP and program staff	PMP prepared
9. Establish targets, set baselines for PMP	USAID, AED, MSI	July	AED/W, MSI/W, COP and program staff	Targets set, baseline data collection process initiated
10. Collect data for annual performance report[9]	USAID	on-going	COP, AED/W, MSI/W	Data collected
11. Conduct pre-award financial and management	HR NGOs	May	COP, plus audit staff	Management and financial audits performed.

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[9] The Annual Performance Report would be prepared on a calendar basis, so the first APR would be prepared in Dec. 2002, and submitted in Jan. 2003. Data collection would go on throughout the year as required by the individual indicators.

audits				
12. Extend TA to short-listed NGOs submitting short-listed concept papers.	HR NGOs	May-June	COP, plus program, fiscal staff	TA extended to HR NGOs in issue areas, and procedural matters
13. Prepare quarterly financial reports	USAID	Dec., March, June, Sept.	COP, fiscal staff	Quarterly reports prepared
14. Prepare semi-annual reports	USAID	April, Oct.	COP, program staff	Reports prepared
15. Grants award, Phase II: Appraise final proposals as submitted; assess applications, present to USAID those with scores of 80% or higher	HR NGOs	June	COP, grants committee	Final grantees selected
16. Award grants	HR NGOs	June-July	COP, and staff	Grants awarded
17. Conduct orientation on financial and performance reporting and USAID grant regulations.	HR NGOs	July	COP, and AED staff	TA extended
18. Announce grant awards and publicize their activities and accomplishments	HR NGOs	July on	COP, program staff	Grants announced
19. Monitor progress and results through site visits, progress reports, and TA	HR NGOs	August on	COP, and program staff	Site visits performed
20. Prepare and carry out first Action Planning Workshop	HR NGOs, other stakeholders	Sept.	COP, program staff, consultants	APW conducted
21. Commission research	HR NGOs, Task Forces, USAID, AED	May-Sept.	COP, other stakeholders	Data collected, analyzed
22. Participant training: identify potential sites; identify and select participant trainees; secure necessary AID approvals	NGO community	4th Quarter	COP, program staff, AED/W	Sites and trainees identified, approvals secured
23. Conduct participant training travel visits	NGO community	Sept.	COP	Visits conducted
24. Other training activities	HR NGOs, Task Forces	Periodic, after 3rd Quarter	COP, Program staff	Trainings conducted
25. Prepare 2nd annual workplan	USAID, AED	Sept.	COP, AED staff	Workplan prepared

ANNEX A: GENDER STRATEGY

AED/MSI has undertaken to devote at least 40% of project resources to gender-based rights concerns. To fulfill this commitment, the project will adhere to three principles: First, the AED/MSI team will be *proactive* in seeking to involve women in the project. Second, AED/MSI will build in diversity *up front*, from the project design process on. Third, AED/MSI distinguishes between "involvement" and "benefit" of women, and will work on both systematically.

The consortium has a number of tools to ensure the effective representation of women within the project. These include the following:

- Staffing: Local staff positions for the project include senior program officer, junior program officer, senior finance officer, and junior finance officer. AED/MSI will actively recruit women for these professional positions, including the senior program officer position. (The senior program officer is expected to become the project director for the fourth and fifth years of the project.)

  Staff will be encouraged by the Team Leader specifically to target women for recruitment into the decision-making process in the project with gender balance a requirement in selection bodies, task forces and advisory groups. The team will monitor for gender sensitivity and equality in potential grantees as well as inclusion of gender issues in project design and implementation.

  In AED/Washington, the Project Manager and Senior Technical Advisor are both women. At MSI/Washington, the technical backstop for the project is a woman.

- Project design process: AED/MSI will build gender issues awareness into the project up front through the design process. The initial needs assessment will proactively include interviews with women and organizations dealing with gender issues. Diversity will then be built into the design of project activities, both substantively and procedurally. The extensive involvement of women in human rights project implementation is virtually a given, due to the leadership profile of potential NGO grantees in Bangladesh. However, the project will focus on adding more substance to the role of these women at the policy level in human rights advocacy.

- Substantive project foci: It is expected that a significant proportion of project funds will be devoted to the topic of violence against women and trafficking, as stated in USAID's initial RFA and in further discussions between AED and USAID during the workplan development.

- Grant program: Organizations focused on women and managed by women will be identified and encouraged to apply for grants through targeted outreach activities, not only for grants in the area of violence against women but also in other substantive areas of project emphasis, particularly at the policy-making level. For example, women's

organizations will be actively invited to the bidder's conference. Women's organizations will then be actively sought out in the distribution of the grant program RFA. Further, all grant applications will ask applicants to describe how their efforts might involve and affect women.

- Training: Training programs will concretely address gender concerns in the selection procedures for training of middle-level as well as senior management. This will be especially true in the programming of participant training exercises. The project will make a special effort to identify opportunities where women can have a substantive impact on public policy dialogue in its later stages.

- Technical Assistance: The project will build on previous USAID WID exercises and AED/MSI home office resources to provide information to its grantees and partner organizations on the latest techniques and methods for integrating and institutionalizing gender-sensitive practices in program management.

- Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation: AED/MSI will disaggregate reporting and evaluation data on the basis of gender. All grantees will be asked to report gender-disaggregated data.

ANNEX B: PEOPLE INTERVIEWED IN INITIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Firoze Ahmed, Human Rights Specialist, Political Section, U. S. Embassy (Dhaka)

Masood Alam Ragib Ahsan, Director, Odhikar

G. M. Khurshid Alam, Senior Private Sector Development Specialist, World Bank Office, Dhaka

Itrat Amin, Research Assistant, Research Fellow, Institutional Development of Human Rights in Bangladesh, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Sanaiyya Faheem Ansari, Advocate, and staff member, Ain O Salish Kendra

Md. Asaduzzaman, Advocate, and staff member, Odhikar

Karen Casper, Representative, The Asia Foundation (Dhaka)

Nishat Chowdhry, Democracy and Governance Team, U. S. Agency for International Development (Dhaka)

Salim Chowdhury, Deputy Director, Jagorani Chakra (Jessore)

Jan Emmert, Democracy Officer and Team Leader, Democracy and Governance Team, U. S. Agency for International Development (Dhaka)

Wazed Feroj, Project Team Leader, Democracywatch

Matthew Friedman, Health Team/Anti-Trafficking program, U. S. Agency for International Development (Dhaka)

Angela Gomez, Executive Director, Banchte Shekha (Jessore), with other staff, including the Director of Legal Awareness Programs

Lily Gomez, Program Officer, Solidarity Center/Bangladesh (American Center for International Labor Solidarity)

Kaiser Haque, Executive Director, Institutional Development of Human Rights in Bangladesh, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Rezaul Haque, Senior Democracy Advisor, Democracy and Governance Team, U. S. Agency for International Development (Dhaka)

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Advocate, and Director (Programmes), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association

Feroz M. Hassan, President, Manabik Shahajya Sangstha, and Executive Secretary, Fair Election Monitoring Alliance, and other staff of MSS/FEMA

Sigma Huda, Advocate, and Secretary General, Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights

Jessica Hunter, Democracy and Governance Specialist, U. S. Agency for International Development (Dhaka)

Md. Ishaque, Advocate and Co-ordinator, Jessore Unit, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (Jessore)

Rafiqul Islam, Deputy Director, Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs

Shahjahan Kabir, Program Advisor, The Asia Foundation

Sultana Kamal, Executive Director, Ain O Salish Kendra

Saiful Karim, Senior Co-ordinator, Program & Logistics, National Democratic Institute Bangladesh

Abdul Rahman Khan, Deputy Attorney for Bangladesh

M. M. Khan, Professor, and Member, Bangladesh Public Service Commission

Zarina Rahman Khan, Principal Adviser, Local Government Initiative, Associates in Rural Development (Bangladesh)

Ove Fritz Larsen, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission, Royal Danish Embassy (DANIDA)

Shaila Parveen Luna, Research Fellow, Institutional Development of Human Rights in Bangladesh, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Mahabooba Mahmood, Project Coordinator, Doorbar Network Project, Naripokkho

Tuhin Chandra Mazumder, Democracy Trainer, Banchte Shekha (Jessore)

S. K. Mondol, Director, Adminstration, Banchte Shekha (Jessore)

M. M. Morshed, Program Officer, Research and Social Survey Unit, Democracywatch

Mohammad Habibur Rahman, Professor, University of Dhaka, and Senior Associate for Local Government and Public Policy, Local Government Initiative, Associates in Rural Development (Bangladesh)

Amb. Waliur Rahman, Director, Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs

Taleya Rehman, Executive Director, Democracywatch

Greg Schulze, Field Representative, Solidarity Center/Bangladesh (American Center for International Labor Solidarity)

Shahiduzzaman, Staff Reporter, The Daily *Prothom Alo*

Shariar Parveen, Assistant Director (Admin.), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust

Md. Haresh Sinha, Social Science Instructor, Imam Training Academy, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh

Muhammad Mohi-Us Sunnah, National Legal Officer, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Ted Thomas, Team Leader, Local Government Initiative, Associates in Rural Development (Bangladesh)

Charles Uphaus, Acting Deputy Director, U. S. Agency for International Development (Dhaka)

Dr. Mohammad Bashiruz Zaman, Executive Director, Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs

ANNEX C: DANIDA HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMS

The Danish Government's foreign aid program deserves a special mention in discussing activities and opportunities in the human rights arena in Bangladesh.

DANIDA was the single most frequently mentioned donor organization in discussions with the Bangladesh human rights NGO community. Its "Human Rights and Good Governance" portfolio of activities is handled at the highest levels of the Danish government presence in Bangladesh, under the responsibility of the Deputy Head of Mission. Its interventions are broad, substantial and multi-faceted.

This portfolio has expanded over time as other sectoral interventions such as education have been reduced and absorbed. Therefore, the activities affect both the margins and the core of human rights in Bangladesh. In the NGO community, DANIDA has invested largely in service delivery for the victims of human rights abuses. Most recently DANIDA has embarked on a major effort to address violence against women through the establishment of "one-stop" crisis centers for victims. These centers are based on a model developed in Malaysia, and provide a range of services for victims including medical treatment, counseling and access to legal assistance. The first unit was inaugurated in August and the intention is to replicate these centers nation-wide. Other examples of DANIDA investment in the Bangladesh human rights NGO community range from infrastructure to training programs. The inventory of Bangladesh human rights NGOs published by DANIDA in 1999 is the only known compendium of organizations available.

Because its human rights activities have expanded and evolved from a targets of opportunity approach to a coordinated program, DANIDA has decided to establish a separate "Human Rights and Good Governance Support Unit" under the umbrella of the diplomatic mission.

DANIDA's involvement with the NGO community is matched with investments in public infrastructure, and efforts to develop cooperation among concerned ministries of the government in addressing selected human rights issues such as violence against women. They have provided infrastructure investments for health facilities such as the burn unit at a government hospital in Dhaka.

More importantly perhaps, DANIDA has been a principal mover in the multi-donor efforts to create a government ombudsman function as well as the more recent drive spear-headed by UNDP to establish and institutionalize an independent Human Rights Commission. Having received a pre-election pledge for action within the first 300 days from the newly installed government, DANIDA is presently pushing for refinement of the legal structure developed for both of these institutions. According to the Deputy Head of Mission, technical assistance provided by the Ombudsman of Denmark has identified areas of overlap between the two legislative frameworks and the need to establish specific enforcement mechanisms as the areas where the Danish government will place its efforts.

Finally, DANIDA is heavily involved in promoting human rights information in the media. It focuses primarily on developing human rights desks at the various Bangladesh news services which feed material to national and regional publications. It is working outside Dhaka through an NGO which operates in major coastal cities in the south, which was cited as a region of specific interest to the Danish government.

In the area of inter-donor coordination, the project anticipates a major and substantial relationship with the DANIDA support unit. The USAID "More Effective Civil Society Advocacy of Human" project and DANIDA will be in a position to mutually leverage each other's efforts and thus have a significant multiplier effect. As an exclusively NGO project, we will be in a position to provide advocacy support materials to DANIDA for use in its channels of communication to the government. Recognizing the importance of coordination with DANIDA as well as other donors in programming the vertical components of the project, we also see significant potential for effective programming along the horizontal axis with DANIDA providing valuable insights derived from its contacts and experience.

ANNEX D: DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT