

# **INTERNSHIP REPORT**

On

**Critical Analysis on Functional Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**

Course: BUS 699

Spring-2017

Prepared For:

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**Date of Submission: June' 2017**

## Preface

MBA Program or the Masters Program comes to end by finishing the Internship. This Internship program is one of the major parts of graduation. In Today's competitive world as a new entrant we need the practical experience rather than the bookish knowledge. So there is nothing more effective and helpful than the internship. This type of program helps the student to acquire practical knowledge through the direct involvement in various Organizations. Moreover the tenure of internship program helps the students to adjust in this new world and to become the future executive. Considering the start of once career the internship is the first and the lasting working experience for the fresh graduates.

As the part of MBA Program BRAC University Assigned me to prepare the internship report on “**Critical Analysis on Functional Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**” from the practical exposure. As an intern of Ain O Salish Kendra I have given my best effort to complete this report.

## Letter of Authorization

June, 2017  
Md. Rahmat Ullah  
ID: 14364098  
Spring-2017  
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**Subject: Authorization Letter.**

Dear Student,

I am Md. Tamzidul Islam, Assistant Professor of BRAC Business School is authorizing you to conduct an internship project on BUS: 699 I have chosen your topic based on your major side of your MBA program, which is **Critical Analysis on Functional Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK).**

Wish you the best!

Sincerely,

Md. Tamzidul Islam  
Assistant Professor  
BRAC Business School  
BRAC University

## Letter of Transmittal

June, 2017  
Md. Tamzidul Islam  
Assistant Professor  
BRAC Business School  
BRAC University

**Subject: Submission of the Internship Report.**

Dear Sir,

With due respect, I am pleased to present you this report on “**Critical Analysis on Functional Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**” as a partial requirement of the Post graduation Program. I would like to inform you that, I am Md. Rahmat Ullah bearing student ID: 14364098, a student of BRAC Business School of BRAC University. My major was on Human Resource Management and it is my great pleasure to inform you that I get the opportunity to submit an internship report on “**Critical Analysis on Functional Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**”. Working for this report has been an interesting & informative experience for me. While doing this report, I learned how to integrate plenty of information into a concise volume.

I tried my level best to put meticulous effort for the preparation of this report. Any shortcomings or flaw may arise as I am very much novice in this aspect. I will wholeheartedly welcome any clarification and suggestion about any view and conception disseminated in my report.

Sincerely yours,  
**Md. Rahmat Ullah**  
ID: 14364098  
BRAC Business School  
BRAC University

## **Student's declaration**

I do hereby declare that the internship report on, “**Critical Analysis on Functional Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**” submitted to the Department of BRAC Business School of BRAC University, for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Business Administration. This report is original and independent research work done by me under the supervision of Md. Tamzidul Islam, Assistant professor, Department of BRAC Business School, BRAC University.

It is also mentioned that this report has not been submitted for other degree/ Diploma.

-----  
Md. Rahmat Ullah  
ID: 14364098  
Program: MBA  
Semester: Spring- 2017  
Major: Human Resource Management  
BRAC Business School  
BRAC University

## **Acknowledgment**

At first, I thank to the “Almighty Allah, who has created me as a human being. He has created me as the best being from all others by giving knowledge, power, spirit and all other things. To prepare this report, I have to go Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), I am glad to learn for their good behave as well as their kindness. They have served me a lot and gave me a lot of documents, which helps me very much to prepare this report.

I would like to express my gratitude to my internship supervisor Md. Tamzidul Islam, Assistant Professor, BRAC Business School, BRAC University for his appropriate suggestions, mental support and invaluable co-operation from time to time in completing the internship report. May Allah reward him.

Finally, this report, with all the interpretation on practical orientation in NGO with the function a mechanism in the field of human activity, would not be possible be without help and cooperation of the officers engaged in the head office of ASK at Lalmatia in Dhaka.

## Executive Summary

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) has passed yet another year of activism, which was also the final year of the project titled “promoting Gender Equality, Human Rights, Democracy and social justice”, the Expressed goal of which was seeking the establishment of the rule of rule of law based on those titular principles.

Ain O Salish (ASK) has focused on creating an enabling environment where citizens are able to demand their rights and entitlements regardless of their class, caste, ethnicity religion or gender as enshrined in Bangladesh’s constitution. ASK has also been committed to creating an atmosphere for building capacity and confidence among the disenfranchised segments of the population, in particular enabling them to protect their basic human rights and demand good governance, accountability and transparency from the state machineries and other relevant authorities.

It is of significance that the year 2016 was the 45<sup>th</sup> year of independence for Bangladesh and, for the present government, the fourth of its five- year term. Intense scrutiny of devolvement’s in the human rights situation of the country over the past year is therefore crucial to successful strategic visioning for ASK’s future role in the country. Notable achievement can be cited in the areas of legal directives and reforms; policies and acts related to women and children; and institution building as part of the government initiatives as well as that of related activist organizations and NGOs for the promotion and prevention of violence against women and children. However, there is no doubt that Bangladesh has become a more unequal society in terms of people’s access to recourse and justice. “The State of Human Rights in Ten Asian Nations 2016”, published by Asian human Rights commission (2016), refers to “ obstacles and systemic lacuna that prevent the effective protection of rights and enable impunity for the perpetration of violations.” The report continues, “The Human Rights situation in Bangladesh is still influenced by confrontational politics.

Extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearance; alleged and suspected wrong- doers being beaten to death by mobs; fragile law and order situation, culture of impunity leading to general sense of insecurity in people’s minds . It cannot be denied that corruption is increasingly linked to violation of human rights. I wish everyone my best and look forward to another year of working together for the next phase of ASK’s program.

## Acronyms

<b>ADR</b>	: Alternative Dispute Resolution
<b>BNAD</b>	: Biddaloy Nattya Dol (School Theatre team)
<b>CAT</b>	: Convention Against Torture
<b>CBO</b>	: Community Based Organization
<b>CDW</b>	: Child Domestic Worker
<b>CEDAW</b>	: Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against women
<b>CHT</b>	: Chittagong Hill Tracts
<b>CO</b>	: Community Organizer
<b>CRC</b>	: Convention On The Rights of the Child
<b>DIC</b>	: Drop-In Centers
<b>EC</b>	: Executive Committee
<b>ED</b>	: Executive Director
<b>FGD</b>	: Focus Group Discussion
<b>FIR</b>	: First Information Report
<b>GD</b>	: General diary
<b>GLAF</b>	: Government Legal Aid Fund
<b>GSJ</b>	: Gender and Social Justice
<b>HR</b>	: Human Rights
<b>HRAU</b>	: Human Rights Awareness Unit
<b>HRDF</b>	: Human Rights Defenders' Forum
<b>HRV</b>	: Human Rights violation
<b>IBDP</b>	: Issue Based Drama Presentation
<b>MIA</b>	: Media and International Advocacy Unit
<b>MNP</b>	: Manabadhikar Nattya Parishad
<b>MNS</b>	: Manabadhikar Nari samaj
<b>MAP</b>	: Manabadhikar Ainjibi Parishad
<b>MIS</b>	: Management Information System
<b>MRRU</b>	: Mediation and Rapid Response Unit
<b>NGO</b>	: Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PCU</b>	: Publication and Communication
<b>PIL</b>	: Public Interest Litigation
<b>PNGO</b>	: Partner Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>PP</b>	: Program proposal
<b>PME</b>	: Planning, Monitoring and Evolution unit
<b>RBA</b>	: Rights Based Approach
<b>SOL</b>	: Social Opinion Leader
<b>TA</b>	: Theatre Activist
<b>TOR</b>	: Terms of Reference
<b>UMNP</b>	: Union Manabadhikar Nattya Parishad
<b>UN</b>	: United nation



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# **CHAPTER-1**

## **Introduction**

## 1.1 Introduction

ASK began as a legal aid service agency in 1986, and in the span of twenty nine years has slowly but assuredly transformed itself into a full-blown human rights organization. The change is remarkable in that many consider legal aid to be the reverse of human rights (HR) approaches. Indeed, Senator Jose Diokno of the Philippines once went so far as to declare that legal aid was no more than "the lawyer's way of giving *alms* to the poor".

Like charity, Diokno elaborated, legal aid merely assuages the people's immediate needs for relief. The solution such aid offers:

....carries within it the seeds of dependence that can prevent those it serves from evolving into self-reliant, inner-directed, creative and responsible persons who think for themselves and act on their own initiative.

Translated into the context of Bangladesh, all legal aid offers is access to a single human right --- the right to equal access to the law. It does not question the moral validity of existing laws, nor their conformance with principles in the national Constitution, which more closely resemble HR. Since Muslim inheritance laws mandate only half a brother's share as the inheritance right of women, all legal aid can attempt is to ensure that a Muslim woman receives 50 per cent of what her brother stands to inherit. As for a Hindu woman, she does not even qualify for a legal appeal because Hindu family law accords inheritance rights only to sons.

Instead of abandoning legal aid, though, ASK embraces it, even going so far as to declare that legal aid is what defines the organization. Legal aid, according to ASK's Executive Director, is "ASK's face to the world".

ASK values legal aid for the anchor it provides in the lives of ordinary people –people whose poverty and lack of education prevent them from turning to courts of law for justice. Such anchoring is important both as a means to express solidarity and to develop an appreciation for the immense challenges inherent in efforts to raise HR awareness among the poor and the marginalized.

The majority of the individuals who turn to ASK for legal aid are women living in poverty. The usual run of problems they respond to has more to do with issues arising from personal and domestic disputes such as polygamy, abandonment, and divorce<sup>3</sup>. Their concerns are dominated by practical issues of being able to secure child custody and child support, maintenance for the wife (if un-divorced) and, in the case of divorce, payment of the dower promised to the wife at the time of marriage. Their most pressing need is for immediate relief, more expediently met through existing laws that provide for food, clothes, healthcare, housing for the women and their children. While changes in law, granting women fair right to child custody, adequate child support, and equal rights to marital property offer the best solution, the process of legal reform

can take generations of life times. As such, the need to rely on whatever recourse is available through current legal provisions --regardless of their flaws.

## **1.2 Definition of NGO**

A **non-governmental organization (NGO)** is a not-for-profit organization that is independent from states and international governmental organizations. They are usually funded by donations but some avoid formal funding altogether and are run primarily by volunteers.

Non-government organization (NGO) generally means any organization not established by government. However, in the context of NGO work over the last three decades in Bangladesh; the term now refers to social organizations, mostly of voluntary and non-profit character, that are engaged in development work. These include informal associations and formal corporations limited in character, well as registered societies. Development NGOs engaged in broad socio-economic uplift of the poor in rural and urban areas are sometimes termed as private voluntary development organizations (PVDO) or voluntary development organizations (VDO). Socio-economic programs of development, advocacy, legal aid, and environment and relief program are also taken up by development NGOs.

## **1.3 Categories of NGO**

NGOs are basically of two type's i.e. ordinary non-governmental organization (NGOs) and international non-government organizations (INGOs). An INGO is that international organization that is not founded by an international treaty. NGOs are not legal entity under international law. In this regard, it will be pertinent to mention here that first ever NGO, the International Committee of Red Cross (now the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement) is an exception to this rule as it is based on Geneva Conventions.

Under the Treaties of Westphalia, 1648 (Munster in Westphalia, the 24<sup>th</sup>, Day of October, 1648), the State is the sole actor in terms of international relations but the concept has been changed<sup>1</sup>.

Internationally NGOs are now passing second generation. In the first phase, international NGOs like Amnesty International was created and developed and in the second phase, human rights NGOs in the national level were established to monitor over all human rights activities in all region of the world.

There is also greater recognition of the role and services by NGOs in Bangladesh and many developing countries are learning from the Bangladesh NGO sector. Most notably sectors of demonstrated include micro credit, social mobilization, non-formal education, participatory resources management, empowerment of women health and population management services and advocacy covering many areas. A more effective set of NGOs have focused on research, awareness raising and advocacy on sustainable development and livelihood issues of addressing poverty, access, governance and integrated and participatory planning.

There are many types of NGOs in the country, but most focus on development or poverty alleviation. Bangladesh is often seen as the birthplace of the micro credit NGO, namely the Grameen Bank. The Comilla District in Bangladesh has also long been the pet project of global developmental theorists and NGOs.

The activities of ADAB are implemented under the following programs: Democracy and Good Governance, Social Justice, Members Relation, Grassroots People's Organizations, NGO Sectoral Relations, Women Empowerment and Equitable Gender Development, Human Resources Development, Transparency, Information and Monitoring, Disaster Preparedness and Management, and Environmental Protection and Ecological Agriculture.

Experience shows that over the last three decades, NGO activities have been concentrated in number areas of intervention. Keeping in view their long-term objectives and visions these areas may be identified as: a) established of effective democratic process at the grassroots; b) poverty alleviation; c) women's rights; d) education; e) health and sanitation; f) family planning, and g) environment.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The main Objective of the study is to gather practical knowledge regarding of ASK. The following are the specific Objectives:

- To get an overall functional activities of Ain O Salish Kendra.
- To evaluate the Activity of Ain O Salish kendra.
- To identify the problems related to Activity faced by Ain O salish Kendra.
- To identify strength and weakness of activity in overall NGO system.
- To suggest the recommendations of those problems related to Activity of ASK.

#### **1.5 History behind the study**

For internship report each student has to prepare a report his or her choice. According to this requirement, I have already completed my internship report on the activities of ASK. An evaluation, on the basis of my practical experience as well as theoretical knowledge, I have completed the report regarding evaluation of the ASK activates. The main focus of my study is to analyze ASK activates. ASK is not business organization. So, ASK does not lead commercial activities but lead human right activities.

#### **1.6 Methodology**

This study will be conducted on the basis of data collected primary and secondary sources. Initially three questionnaires will be developed, one for the ordinary citizens and the second one shall be developed to find out the experience of the NGO activists and the third one shall focus the idea of exerts in this field mainly researchers, university teachers An empirical survey will be conducted where efforts will be undertaken for assessing the true scenario of the NGOs and possible solutions shall tried to find out if needed. In the first survey Endeavour shall be taken to find out the exact length of knowledge of common people about their right which are raised and protected by and because of NGOs and in the second survey I shall try to assess how the NGO activists are concerned about different aspects of human rights and what actually they are doing in promoting and protecting the human rights of muss people whereas by the third questionnaire



experts in this area in home and abroad (here korea) will be interviewed to find out their opinion and observation to fit the NGOs more focused on human rights issues.

### **1.6.1 Primary Sources**

- a. Practical desk report
- b. Direct observations
- c. Face to face conversation with the officers

### **1.6.2 Secondary sources**

- a. Annual report of ASK
- b. Various Publication on NGO
- c. Websites
- d. Different circulars send by head office of ASK

## **1.7 Rationale of the study**

There are nationalized human organizations, NGO organizations and foreign organizations in our country. So have decided to study on topic '**Activities of ASK**' an evaluation; because the internship report of the university is an integral part of the MBA program. So it is obligatory to undertake such task by the students who desirous to complete and successfully end up their MBA degree. This also provides an opportunity to the students to minimize the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge. That is way I have prepared this report.

## **1.8 Limitations of the study**

There were some problems while I conducting the orientation a whole-hearted effort was applied conduct the whole-hearted effort, there exit some limitations. This acted as a barrier to conduct program. The limitations were.....

- Sometimes I was assigned to do some official jobs out of my office. This situation has created a lot of problems to understand why a specific function is being performed.
- Lack of experience.
- Lack of in depth knowledge and analytical ability for writing such report.
- All the branches the sample NGO were not physically visited.
- All the concerned personal of the ASK has not been interviewed.
- Two month is not enough for preparing these types of report.
- Learning all the NGO functions about activities within just three month are not possible.
- Another limitation of this report is NGO policy of not disclosing some data and information for obvious reason, which could be very much useful.

## **Chapter-2**

Profile of the Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)

Activity.

## **2.1 Historical Development of ASK**

As stated earlier, the NGOs in Bangladesh are working in every single sector of Bangladesh. The activities of Bangladeshi ASK NGO's now cross the limitation of border.

ASK in Bangladesh has been involved in the delivery of most of the basic services such as education, health, legal service and human rights service.

In Bangladesh, concerned organizations have challenged illegal detention of an innocent person for 30 years without trial importation of radio-active milk, environmental damage resulting from defective flood action program.

NGOs like Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) work on wide area of issues relating to human rights. ASK is actively engaged in advocacy against the violation of fundamental rights of citizens. Since its inception in 1986, ASK has provided legal aid and support to the victims of fundamental rights violations, including that of children and prisoners, through its staff and panel of lawyers, who regularly take up fundamental rights matters before the High Court Division. The Applicant organization also undertakes activities aimed at the promotion and protection of human rights at the national international level.

In 2002 ASK provided legal aid to 89 children in safe custody from the lower courts and Police Station. Two children, namely Bahar and Suman, were being tried jointly with the adult prisoners in the Jananirapatta Tribunal No 3, Dhaka in connection with Jananirapatta case no 241/2002. ASK came to know about the case and appeared before the Court. ASK prayed for separate charges to be framed for Bahar and Suman and to send them from Dhaka Central Jail to the National Correction Center, Tongi, Gazipur. The court was pleased to frame separate charges for Bahar and Suman and to send them to the National Correction, Center, Tongi, Gazipur. Moreover the Applicant organization has been providing support to the street children in terms of education, food, clothing, shelter and medical treatment through its six Drop in Centers (DIC) in Dhaka City. In the year 2002, 1,106 children were registered in six DICs of the applicant organization. The assistance to children has been part of ASK's work in favor of disenfranchised and underprivileged groups of citizens, which include children, women, religious and ethnic minorities, and socially marginalized segments of society.

ASK became the vocal of public in a good number of cases including eviction of Kallanpur Pora Basti (slum) consisting of 5 bastis (slums) at Mirpur spread over about 53 acres of land where about 20000 people were dwelling. The bosti (slum) was established about 25 years ago. On 21.12.2003, the Housing Building Research Institute with back up from about 300 police led by a Magistrate forcibly evicted the dwellers of section 2-4 from their homes without any prior notice as required by law. In a similar case, ASK challenged eviction of slum-dwellers in Dhaka without making any alternative arrangement. The Supreme Court order that the eviction should precede phases by phase, giving reasonable time and rehabilitate the slum-dweller.

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) also moved the Supreme Court against the discriminatory notice issued by the Health Ministry calling for applications for the post of Health Assistant. The notice (issued by the Health Directorate) states that female applicants must be married, and that they should submit a certificate of proof of marriage/marriage registration certificate along with other application papers. Other requirements relate to education, age and residence.

## **2.2 Components of ASK's Legal Aid Programme**

- The Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU). Provides mediation service as well assistance via rescue. Facilitates link-up with ASK's Training Unit and its workshops in gender relations analysis, leadership development, self-empowerment. Also links up with Psycho-Social Counseling Unit services. *MRRU* routinely monitors and follows up on agreements arrived at through mediation or litigation, e.g., agreements about parental rights to visit children, a wife's right to use the phone, visit her on parents and friends etc
- The Litigation Unit (LAU). Provides legal representation to those open to claiming rights through action in courts. Links up with Training Unit and Psychosocial Counseling when requested.
- Psycho-Socio Counseling Unit (PSCU). Provides individual and group counseling to users of ASK's legal aid. Also provides training and refresher training in counseling techniques to other NGOs and organizations.
- The Half-Way Home. Provides comprehensive support to women under threat of violence or needing temporary housing. Besides housing, food and medical treatment,

and counseling, the Half-Way Home provides access to all training programmes and workshops available to other users of legal aid. Also, arranges vocational training and small business management training with help of external trainers. Stresses training with strong market potentials.

- The Outreach Unit is responsible for assisting other NGOs to replicate ASK's legal aid system outside Dhaka. The Unit provides hands-on technical support to NGOs in managing legal aid clinics, liaising with panels of lawyers who are willing to represent clients living at or near the poverty line. Outreach operates in urban centres of seven districts, i.e., Chittagong, Barisal, Hobigonj, Statkhira, Rajshahi, Tangail and Bogra.

### **2.3 ASK'S PROJECT: CREATING PARTNERS**

Today, the tenability of ASK's opposition to extrajudicial killings is no longer disputed. This change bears out ASK's faith in maintaining open dialogue and trust in the innate power of people to reason. The transformation is strong testimony to the faith ASK places in the *other* --- regardless of their education, economic status, ethnic or religious background; and despite of the gap separating the unlettered women visiting its legal aid clinics from the lawyer working *pro bono* in the High Court for workplace safety of garment workers.

Another factor highlighted by developments in the last 12 years, is the value of the faith ASK places in creating partnerships in society. Given the conflicting pressures that different socio-economic interests and power centre's place upon the State, ensuring HR cannot be left to a handful of professional organizations. Ultimately ensuring HR depends on an informed, aware

citizenry, which is familiar with



appropriate methods for protest and protection, and inspired to do so. This can only be achieved by going beyond empowerment to build partnerships from the grassroots up – a project that forms the core of ASK's work, leading it to expand its work beyond Dhaka and into the countryside. As a result of the work of its Human Awareness Unit, its Gender and Social Justice Unit, and its Investigation Unit, ASK is now able to share its workload with groups of school children youth and college students, women's groups at village, union, *thana* and district levels; groups of social activists in pourashavas and district towns –comprising journalists, lawyers, educators, doctors and students in higher education. Collectively, these partners help to raise awareness among young and old, literate and those lacking literacy, women and men, professional and farmer, ordinary citizen and elected leader. They organize rallies to celebrate important landmarks in the march for HR; protest child marriage, domestic violence, irregularities in village mediation sessions and corruption in social safety systems; stand in human chains to raise their voice against attacks on minorities. Of late, their HR activism has moved to more abstract levels. Groups of professionals at district level now compile HR monitoring reports for their respective areas and publish books about the challenges and opportunities in promoting HR. Finally, groups trained and organized by the Investigation Unit undertake investigations on their own, and alert ASK and the national media about incidents of violence and HR violations in remote areas.

## **2.4 Mission**

To establish through the introduction of welfare oriented human activities and also gender equally and justice in the field of human activities, achieve equal rights growth and development through human rights. To encourage socio-economic uplift and human services to the low income community particularly in the rural and urban areas.

## **2.5 Thematic priorities**

- I. Human rights awareness increased from grassroots to state institutions.
- II. Community activism for gender and social justice promoted.
- III. Access to justice system increased.
- IV. Advocacy initiatives to influence law and policy reform strengthened.
- V. Human rights situation addressed to increase transparency and accountability in public.
- VI. Capacity of human rights actors enhanced.
- VII. Effective institutional system strengthened

## **2.6 Glossary**

**Fatwa:** Arabic for opinion of a person knowledgeable in Shariah. In Bangladesh villages, it is decreed by people who have no legal authority; they do not clarify an ambiguous legal situation but weigh up evidence which traditionally was never a function of a fatwa giver. Increasingly, fatwa's are pronounced during salish sessions. Some punitive fatwas have been issued against women, who were divorced, for working with NGOs or just working outside the home. Some punishments are inhuman, such as, flogging, buried up to waist and stoning, beating with shoe etc.



**Hilla:** Intervening marriage often imposed in cases where the husband -- on an impulse -- verbally divorces the wife, repents later and wants to take her back. Although practiced in some places, it has no legal foundation in Bangladesh.

**PNGOs:** ASK has a Dhaka- based office. In order to carry out local activities, e.g. advocacy, training, legal aid etc, it selects like- minded Partner non government organizations at the community level. ASK also provides technical support, while these organizations are responsible for arranging project activities. ASK also provides training on family law, human right, women's rights etc to see the organizations growing up as a Human Rights organization.

**Salish:** An informal, traditional system of mediation used to settle marital and land disputes outside the court

**Salishkar:** Mediators who conduct salish. Generally, local elected representatives, school teachers, NGO workers, religious leaders, etc.

## **2.7 ASK at a Glance**

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a national legal aid and human rights organization, was established in 1986. Initially its work was limited to providing free legal services to the disempowered— particularly women, working children and workers in Dhaka city. However, over the last twenty nine years ASK has developed a more comprehensive approach to the promotion and protection of legal and human rights.

ASK has no political affiliation and adopts a non-partisan approach in defiance of human rights. It is a membership based organization founded by nine individuals (4 women and 5 men, 4 deceased). It currently has 23 general members, 15 women and 8 men. A nine member executive committee, currently comprising 5 women and 4 men, meets regularly to decide on policy matters. The general members meet once every year. ASK has consultative status with UNECOSOC.

- Societies Registration Act, 1860 since September 20, 1986
- Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance, 1978 since June 28, 1993
- NGO Affairs Bureau, 1993
- Special consultative status with UNECOSOC since July 31, 1998

## **Chapter: 3**

### **ASK's UNITS AND THEIR WORK**

### 3.1 HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS UNIT (HRAU)

One of the major obstacles to protecting of HR in Bangladesh is a general lack of public awareness about not only their human rights but even their legal rights.

Another added dimension to the problem is people's indifference to seeking redress. The Human Rights Awareness Unit responds by attempting to raise awareness about legal rights and human rights, and build capacity for demanding justice. It focuses on developing the capabilities of high school children and youth in the districts to act as catalysts of HR awareness, and trains them to use drama and performance to engage audiences. The plays are open-ended and designed to encourage discussion and debate with the audience once the performance ends. The Unit provides training in legal rights and HR, on the one hand; and how to develop scripts, produce and stage open-ended plays, and facilitate discussions with the audience, on the other.

In 2015, HRA programmes covered 52 high schools, and 13 youth groups in 13 districts.

Employees:



### 3.2 GENDER AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UNIT (GSJU)

The Gender and Social Justice Unit takes up where the Human Rights Awareness ends, and is more concerned to strengthen community HR activism. It facilitates the formation of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) at village, union, and district levels, and encourages them to create local networks for monitoring and defending HR in their localities. The Unit places a strong emphasis on achieving gender equality, and implements its programme in collaboration with “partner” NGOs (PNGOs). GSJ provides intensive training through seminars, workshops, on-the-job coaching, and task-related interactions. Also important in raising HR awareness and enthusiasm are rallies and festive celebrations to observe landmark days in the progress of HR (national liberation day, women's rights day etc.). CBOs are responsible for monitoring and ensuring justice in their local areas. A central function of CBOs at the levels of village and union is to participate as mediators in local *Salish* bodies, and to protest when rights are violated. At the level of sub-district and district, CBOs are involved in publishing HR situation reports and an annual journal comprising articles and poems on personal experiences in HR activism, emerging challenges and strategies in HR activism. In the interests of greater sharing of skills and a developing a strong sense of mission, the programme pays close attention to establishing strong linkages between CBOs at different levels of village, union, and district on the one hand; and between CBOs, and government departments and local representative structures. The former enables CBOs in villages and unions to access (especially trained) HR-oriented lawyers practicing in district courts, while CBOs at district level are enabled to access support for their demonstrations and rallies. The latter, leads CBOs about to feel more confident about their ability to negotiate with people in positions of power. GSJ takes pains to ensure the viability and resonance of the linkages between CBOs and formal bodies by requiring continuous interactions between them. Such interactions are occasioned by programmed activities that require CBOs to monitor the integrity of social safety net systems, disaster relief programmes, health and education services etc. These require CBOs to engage with formal structures for information regarding the entitlements of the poor and vulnerable groups, followed up by reporting on their



Findings and, where necessary, protesting corruption. Also helpful is GSJ's objective to strengthen the capabilities of women elected to office in Union Parishads (UPs) (UPs) and other representative bodies, and to energize existing programmes, designed for women and children, which languish in disuse. For example, GSJ finds that local bodies are frequently unaware of niche projects on offer by the government that provide for employment creation for women, child and maternal health and the like.

### **3.3 TRAINING UNIT**

The Training Unit is vital to continuity and new skills development at ASK. It develops original training modules and materials, and is responsible for serving four categories of trainees.

### **3.4 Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU).**

ASK's Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU) provides mediation as well as “Rapid Response” services. The latter cover referrals to other agencies as well as rescue. Mediation deals mainly with family disputes but also intervenes in disputes involving allegations of mistreatment of women workers, such as women working in the garment industry or employed as maids, child-minders and cooks in homes. An important aspect of its work is post mediation monitoring thru off-site visits by ASK field staff to monitor compliance with agreements made during mediation. Monitoring plays a positive role in restoring the balance in unequal relationships between women and men, employee and employer. Some examples of agreements that MMRU monitors are non-custodial parents' right to visit children, a wife's right to use the

phone or to visit her parents, friends etc. MMRU links up users with services available from other units both within the legal service programme and external to it. It links up users with the Psycho-Social Unit for individual and family counseling; and with ASK's Training Unit, which is external to the legal aid service programme. In 2015, the Training Unit offered a total of eight workshops for users of the legal aid programme. The workshops were attended by a total of 154 individual, 12 of who were men. These linkages are critical to ensuring security, recovery from psychological trauma and damage, personal leadership development, and economic skills development.

### **3.5 The Litigation Unit**

The Litigation Unit Provides legal representation in formal courts to those open to claiming rights through litigation. The Unit organizes lawyers who are willing to donate time for representing people who cannot afford court and legal fees. The Unit links up users to the same ancillary supports as MMRU.

### **3.6 The Psycho-Social Counseling Unit (PSCU)**

The Psycho-Social Counseling Unit (PSCU) leadership development offers individual and group counseling to users of ASK's mediation or litigation services. It also organizes training workshops in leadership skills development, stress management, positive communications. The Unit has played a



pioneering role in introducing counselling to Bangladesh and continues to serve in that role. In 2015, PSCU counselled 464 users of ASK's mediation and legal aid services. Of these, 367 were women and girls; and 97, men and boys. 280 people receive individual therapy, while 184 users

received group therapy. Among those receiving group therapy, were 119 children from ASK's Drop-in Centres. The children were divided in seven groups.

### **3.7 The Support Services and Half-Way Home Unit (SS&HH)**

The Support Services and Half-Way Home Unit (SS&HH) provides comprehensive support to women, and their children, under immediate threat of violence or needing temporary housing. Besides housing, food, medical treatment, and counselling, the Half-Way Home provides access to all training opportunities offered by the Training Unit, MMRU and the Psycho-Social Counselling Unit. In addition, the Home maintains a staff counsellor for ongoing support; offers special workshops on handling stress and leadership development; and courses on economic skills and entrepreneurial management.

### **3.8 The Outreach Unit**

The Outreach Unit is responsible for assisting other NGOs to replicate ASK's legal aid system in the districts. The Unit provides hands-on technical support to NGOs in establishing and managing legal aid clinics outside Dhaka. As in Dhaka, the PNGO-managed clinics conduct mediation and offers legal representation in courts. Users are represented by panels of lawyers who are especially trained by ASK, and committed to protecting the rights of individuals who are unable to afford standard court and legal fees.

In 2015-2016, Outreach operated in urban centres in seven districts: Chittagong, Barisal, Hobigonj, Shakhira, Rajshahi, Tangail and Bogra.

### **3.9 DOCUMENTATION UNIT**

Low-keyed but vital to ASK's work, the Documentation Unit is the eyes and ears of ASK. Its central function is to monitor incidents of violence and HR violations in the country. Monitoring is through scanning and compiling a list of incidents of violations from nine dailies, two weeklies, one monthly, and two quarterlies. It is through this list that ASK is able to diversify its intake beyond the limitations of its legal aid clinics and respond to more public violations of people's rights that are more easily construed as violations of fundamental rights. ASK begins each day with an Action Meeting, which reviews the list of violations compiled by Documentation, and decide which of the incidents it will follow up through investigation, legal action, appeals to the government for remedial action etc. The Documentation Unit also maintains a library of books, journals, audio-visual resources, and documentaries, which is open to the public; develops bibliographies at the request of ASK staff, journalists, students and researchers; and distributes ASK's quarterly *Bulletin* and allied publications. Every month, the



Unit screens a documentary of film in order to familiarize staff with new HR issues and perspectives

### 3.10 INVESTIGATION UNIT

The function of ASK's Investigation Unit (IU) is to ensure transparency and accountability in public institutions. The unit regularly monitors and investigates complex cases of violence and HR violations; and appeals to the government for remedial action. The Unit refers cases for follow-up to other ASK units through PIL or routine litigation, respectively. IU also writes articles on cases for the national press. Investigations by the Unit prioritize violence committed by the State, violence against minorities, and violence involving large institutions such as the healthcare industry, garment industry, the media. In 2015, violence by the State accounted for 45 per cent of total investigations by ASK, followed by violence against religious and ethnic minorities, which accounted for 15 per cent. IU is concerned to strengthen capabilities for HR activism in the districts. The latter entails encouraging the formation of Human Rights Defenders' Forums (HRDFs) in the districts and providing training in HR



Investigative methodologies, reporting writing, liaising with district administration and law enforcement, and community organizing. Comprised of journalists, lawyers, educationists,

college students and the like, many of these HRDFs have begun to conduct investigations on their own and take the initiative in liaising with the authorities for remedial action. At present, there are 19 HRDFs in operation in a corresponding number of districts; many have acquired sufficient experience and confidence to act as adjuncts to IU. It is noteworthy that, in addition to 85 investigations directly conducted by ASK, the IU was privy to findings from 69 investigations conducted by HRDFs. HRDFs followed up with 169 appeals to various authorities for remedial action.

### **3.11 PUBLICATION AND COMMUNICATION UNIT**

The Publication Unit is central to ASK's efforts to serve as a clearing house of information about new problems, perspectives and strategies in HR promotion. The Unit publishes books; a quarterly journal entitled the *Bulletin*, and contributes articles for publication in the mainstream newspapers and periodicals. The *Bulletin*, published exclusively in Bangla, is considered a key resource for HR activism in Bangladesh. It seeks to interest students of law and young lawyers in HR promotion by organizing annual workshops on new trends and problems in HRs and strategies for responding them.

### **3.12 LEGAL ADVOCACY & POLICY REFORM UNIT**

The Legal Advocacy and Policy Reform Unit are concerned with issues of fundamental rights and Constitutional rights that closely resemble HR concepts. It uses public interest litigation (PIL) to challenge existing laws on grounds that they violate fundamental rights protected under the constitution. Besides litigation, the Unit also uses advocacy to promote HR perspectives and demand legal reform of established laws. Methods include preparing drafts of improved laws; commenting draft laws proposed by the government or other agencies; monitoring domestic application of international HR instruments; assessing of the extent to which judgments given in PIL cases are implemented; and introducing the use of PIL in lower courts by strengthening the capabilities of lawyers practicing outside Dhaka city.

### **3.13 MEDIA & INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY UNIT (MIA)**

The Media and International Advocacy Unit (MIA) is responsible for liaising with the national media; national and international HR organizations; and participating in regional and international forums. Its tasks include developing press statements; updating the ASK website, publishing and distributing E-Bulletins; organizing national and regional workshops and conferences; and contributing ideas, analyses and reports to various forums. National forums include: the Secretariat of the Human Rights Forum, Bangladesh (HRFB); international forums

are: Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI), and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA).

### **3.14 CHILD RIGHTS UNIT**

ASK's Child Rights Unit plays a strong role in advocacy for child rights in Bangladesh while, at the same time, providing a plethora of services to children designed to ultimately end child labour. The Unit is one of 10 organizations that comprise the Child Rights Advocacy Coalition of Bangladesh, which carries responsibility for developing the alternative report, which is submitted to the UNHCR every four years. In 2015, the Unit operated 6 Drop-in-Centres 2 Socialization Centres, and 2 Creative Learning Centres full-time, and 6 part-time Community-Based Learning Centres in Dhaka. The core of CRU's approach to educating children is equipping them with the skills and attitudes needed to enable them *to learn to learn*. The goal of CRU's education initiative is to support children to find better paid employment as adults and to develop into full *contributory members* of society, especially their own communities. CRU uses its education programme as the launching pad for intensive efforts to change the attitudes of parents, adults, employers, members of the community, administration and policy-makers towards using child labour. CRU is exceptional in its concern to change existing child management practices. Rooted in traditions that often condone negative reinforcement and corporeal punishment, --- practices that ultimately leads to a high tolerance for psychological abuse and physical violence directed against children. Consequently, CRU's programme calls for a daunting array of meetings and training programmes carefully tailored for different audiences. It also encourages children to explore their own experiences and emotions through group workshops. In 2015, the Unit arranged for 119 children from its Drop-in Centres to receive attend counselling seven group workshops run by ASK's Psycho-Social Counselling Unit.'



One of the most innovative and forward-looking aspect of CRU's programme is its efforts to create child safe urban neighbourhoods where community and business leaders, elected representatives, the local police, local offices of government departments, NGOs, hospitals etc. come together to formalize new institutions. One such institution is neighbourhood watch points that are responsible for maintaining a register of child workers, and regularly monitoring their workplace safety. A related innovation is community boards that regularly monitor CRU's education centres, make decisions regarding participation in community rallies, School outings to zoo, parks etc.

## **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

ASK's institutional development activities are managed by three strategically important units Administration, Accounts, Finance and Planning, and Monitoring and Evaluation (PME). They ensure the smooth functioning of the organization.

### **3.15 ADMINISTRATION (ADMIN) UNIT**

The Administration Unit (ADMIN) provides logistical support for the smooth running of the organization and meets all legal and other requirements of the Government and ASK'S Executive Committee. It looks after all infrastructural and personnel management.

### **3.16 ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE (A&F) UNIT**

The Accounts and Finance (A&F) Unit manages ASK's finances and prepares accounts. It manages pay roll and funds for implementation of programs, purchase of services, equipment, supplies and insurance. It also report to donors, NGOAB, DC Office and any other reports relating to accounts and finance.

### **3.17 PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (PME) UNIT**

The Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Unit prepares project proposals, regularly monitors and evaluates implementation of programme, liaises with donors, prepares reports for GoB, donors, ASK Executive Committee, ASK management and others, providing logistics support to evaluation exercises. It develops formats for monitoring, supervision and maintains an MIS system.

### **3.18 INTERNAL AUDIT (IA) UNIT**

An appraisal or monitoring activity established within an Organization as a service to the Organization. Internal audit functions basically include, amongst things, examining, evaluating, and reporting to the management and the Directors/Members of the adequacy and effectiveness of the component of accounting and internal control system. It has two key roles to play in relation to organizational risk management-ensuring the organization's risk management system operates effectively and the strategies implemented in respect of operational risks operate effectively.



## **Chapter-4**

# Analysis of ASK's Unit Activity And Findings

ASK's institutional development activities are managed by three strategically ensure the smooth functioning of the organization.

Important units administration Accounts, and Finance, and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) units.

#### **4.1 Administration Unit (ADMIN)**

The Administration unit (ADMIN) provides logical support for the smooth running of the organization. It meets all legal and reporting requirements demanded by the government, donors, and the organization ASK's executive committee. It looks after all infrastructural and personnel management.

#### **4.2 The Accounts & Finance Unit (ACFIN)**

The Accounts and Finance manages ASK's finance. It prepares budgets, manages payroll, funds implementing programmes, and pays for services, equipment supplies and insurance.

#### **4.3 Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PME)**

The planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PME) is responsible for preparing project proposals, monitoring

programme activities of different units and providing feedback, liaising with donors, preparing reports, providing logistic support to evaluation exercises, developing formats for programme monitoring ,supervising and monitoring the use and performance of its MIS system.

#### **4.4 Human resource Development**

ASK staff attended 43 national and 11 international trainings/ workshops/ seminars/meetings/study circle, etc. To enhance the professional capacity of ASK staff, the Administrative Unit imitated 6 training in 2015, in which 129 (male-49and female-80) staff participated.



#### **4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation of Field programme**

By visiting different working areas OF ASK, PME unit observed its programmes and provided suggestions and feedback. PME staff also tried to evaluate the organizations collaboration with PNGOs and other partners, their monitoring mechanisms and reporting systems and the impact of these programmes.

## **ASK existing Members**

### **Founder Members**

Late Mr. Aminul Haq  
Late Barrister Salma Sobhan  
Late Justice K. M. Subhan  
Late Advocate Abdul Khaleque  
Sir Fazle Hasan Abed  
Dr. Hameeda Hossain  
Ms. Khursheed Erfan Ahmed  
Ms. Taherunnessa Abdullah  
Barrister Amirul Islam  
Late Justice K. M. Subhan  
Late Advocate Abdul Khaleque  
Sir Fazle Hasan Abed  
Dr. Hameeda Hossain  
Ms. Khursheed Erfan Ahmed  
Ms. Taherunnessa Abdullah  
Barrister Amirul Islam

### **Executive committee Members**

Taherunnessa Abdullah (Chairperson)  
Advocate Z. I. Khan Panna  
Sultana Kamal (Ex-Officio) (Member)  
Barrister Nihad Kabir  
Tahmina Rahman (Treasurer)  
Barrister Sara Hossain  
Advocate Md. Asaduzzaman  
Rokshana Khondokar  
Fatema Rashid Hasan

### **General members**

Afsana wahab  
Dilruba shahana  
Dr. Faustina Pereira  
Fatema Rashid Hasan  
Isaac Robinson  
Khurshid Alam

Karunamoy Chakma  
Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta  
Md. Asaduzzaman  
Md. Nur khan  
Barrister Nihad kabir  
Neela Matin  
Roushan Jahan Parvin  
Rokshana Khondokar  
Roushan Jahan  
Sultana Kamal  
Barrister Sara Hossain  
Shameem Akhtar  
Syed Mahbubar Rahaman  
Tahmina Rahman  
Tanjina Huq Tiru  
Advocate Z I Khan panna  
Zaved Hasan Mahmood

## **Chapter-5**

### Recommendations and Conclusion

## **5.1 Recommendations**

One of the major hindrances to protection of human rights protection in Bangladesh is a general lack of public awareness about their legal and human rights. Their lack of knowledge enables them to be easily exploited by both state and non-state actors. Even if they realize that their rights have been violated. Most people do not know how to seek redress. This is why ASK's foremost strategy is to create awareness and mobilize public action on a range of legal and human rights. ASK seeks to promote a culture of tolerance for political and cultural diversity, and to demand good governance and social justice by advancing a human rights discourse in the community as well as with the state.

The HRA unit engages with a variety of social actors to bring about a change in public consciousness. It uses action theatre as a medium for disseminating information amongst high school students and local community of youth, and cultural activists and sensitizing them to human rights, gender equality so that they can independently act to prevent human rights violations.

The unit trains school and college students, youth and local cultural activities in action theatre methodology. They learn to enact open-ended plays and skits on local human rights issues, so as to engage the general public in discussions on human rights.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION:**

The future success of sustainability of Gameen Bank, BRAC, Proshika, BLAST, BNWLA, BSAF and others NGOs model will depend largely on answering to the above raised questions. The majority of these NGOs can be grouped under the umbrella of 'poverty alleviation' and apart from this; most of the NGOs have an underlying concern to raise the capacity of the poor to participate in national social and democratic processes. In other words, most of these NGOs have become powerful tools by which to mobilize people for voluntary group action to work towards development and self-reliance.

However, we need to remind ourselves that we cannot talk simply about whether these programs are good or bad, empowering or dis-empowering. This is because so much of the answer depends on the program design, the context, the beneficiaries able (or allowed) to take advantage of the

program, and our assumptions about what empowerment means in the context of global capitalism. Hence, our understanding of NGO activities in Bangladesh, i.e., micro enterprise promotion as well as others activities, which are necessary for the development of the poor, through micro credit and others activities taken by the NGOs should be conscious of its operating in a context of global capital, national development, and international lending.

Human rights as fundamental to the as to the rich, and their protection is as important to the security and prosperity of the developed world as it is to that of the developing world. It would be a mistake to treat human rights as though there were a trade-off to be made between human rights and such goals as security or development. We only weaken our hand in fighting the horrors of extreme poverty or terrorism if, in our efforts to do so, we deny the very human rights that these scourges take away from citizens. Strategies based on the protection of human rights are vital for both our moral standing and practical effectiveness of our actions

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