



Research Monograph Series No.13

**The Development Organization and
Constraints to Development:
BRAC Experience with Religious
Organization in Relation to Human
Rights and Legal Education Posters**

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Research and Evaluation Division
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PREFACE

The Research and Evaluation Division (RED) of BRAC provides necessary research support to BRAC programmes. BRAC, one of the largest multifaceted non-governmental organizations in the world, works for poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor since 1972. Established in 1975, RED conducts action research, impact and evaluation studies, diagnostic studies, and longitudinal studies on BRAC programmes. RED also undertakes studies on important national and international issues related to development with various national and international institutions at home and abroad.

The 'Research Monograph Series' intends to disseminate some of the significant research findings to scientists, researchers, policy makers, implementers, and other interested groups.

The organizations or groups in a society with different values, objectives and operational procedure may contradict with each other. In a contradiction, an organization or group can resist another from functioning – leading to a social conflict. BRAC, almost since inception, has faced resistance in its functioning from the religious organizations. This study diagnosed the cause of such resistance in a recent backlash against BRAC posters on Human Rights and Legal Education. In the light of the diagnoses, the study singled out strategies, adoption of which is likely to help BRAC and other development organizations operate smoothly free from resistance of other organizations or group functioning in the society.

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ABSTRACT

To educate people on human rights and some essential laws BRAC fixed 700,000 posters throughout Bangladesh. Displaying of the posters faced backlashes from the religious organizations. This paper investigated the nature and causes of the backlash and accordingly chalked out strategies for smooth functioning of the development organizations in achieving their objectives. Interpretation of the posters based on the Holy Koran and Islamic practices, intrusion in the professional territory of religious organizations, and affecting the socioeconomic interest of the group representing the organizations were responsible for the backlash. In the light of these findings it was concluded that the development organizations should convince people of its cause by clearly spelling out its objectives, and formulating as such so that the opposing organizations may not get a scope to resist the development activities.

INTRODUCTION

The organizations comprising a society, are composed of individuals, “operate according to definite rules to pursue one or more specific objectives” (1). The individuals representing an organization may form a group. The organizations occasionally may not coexist in harmony. When this type of relationship exists between the organizations one desires that other do not carryout its role, in extreme cases may take violent measures to prevent the latter from functioning.

The organization facing resistance may or may not react against it. If the resistance is such that the organization is obstructed from operating and do not opposing to the resistance, the organization will fall short in meeting its objectives. In contrast, if the organization reacts and manages in overcoming resistance it will be able to meet its objectives. The functioning of the organization in this case is likely to be at the cost of extra resource, energy and time over the one facing no resistance. Thus, for the successful and cost-effective operation of an organization it is absolutely imperative for the organization to frame its objectives and activities as such that it may not face resistance from any other organization. Where resistance cannot be avoided the cause for resistance should be diagnosed and remedial measures should be taken.

Two important organizations constituting the social fabric of Bangladesh are the religious organization and BRAC. The mosques and *madrassa* (Islamic theology schools) together constitute the religious organization¹. For centuries, since mass conversion of people to Islam, the organization is in charge of the religiosity of Muslims in Bangladesh (2). The prime function of this organization is to ensure that Islam is believed as a faith and properly practiced in the society. Any idea considered not according to the tenets of Islam and any practice considered contradictory to the dictates of Islam is opposed by this organization. BRAC, in comparison to religious organization, is merely a recent introduction to Bangladesh. It has been created to promote welfare and development of the poor through poverty alleviation and empowerment. To achieve these objectives it introduces programmes for the poor. The programme activities mainly involve upgrading human capital of the poor through training, providing resources to them, e.g., loan, and facilitating change in their occupations to create opportunities for implementation of training and use of the resources given. By the end of 1997 BRAC has extended its activities to 57% of the villages in Bangladesh (3,4).

BRAC, realized that an overwhelming portion of the rural poor in Bangladesh were unaware of their legal rights. This not only barred the poor from upholding their rights but also allowed other to exploit them and in particular, women. BRAC thus decided to take measures in redressing this problem, and in 1989 launched the Human Rights and Legal Education (HRLE) programme. The goal of the programme is to empower the members of Village Organizations² (VO) formed by BRAC through educating them on human rights and some essential laws of Bangladesh (5,6).

The human rights and laws that the programme deals with can be grouped under four titles: 1) Citizen's Right Protection Law, 2) Muslim Family Law, 3) Muslim Inheritance Law, and 4) Land Law. The training is the means used for educating VO members, and in fact it is the pivot around which the whole programme revolves. By 1996, the programme had trained 560,066 VO members and intends to expand it considerably by providing training to 1 million members by the end of the year 2000 (6,7).

BRAC initiated the programme on the assumption that raising legal awareness among the VO members would help them protect

¹ The mosque and *madrassa* traditionally are considered two separate organizations as they function with distinctly different objectives. For the convenience of expression the organizations have been referred to as one in this paper.

² An organization of the poor, supported and patronized by BRAC. Female villagers whose family own less than half an acre of land and its members sold manual labour were eligible to join it. A VO is formed with 45 members.

themselves from illegal, unfair or discriminatory practices (5). But, it was observed that the rights of VO members were on occasions infringed upon because those who infringed the rights were themselves not aware of the laws or the rights of the people. It was also observed that in occasions VO members were compelled to violate the laws as those who compelling were not aware of the laws. Seeing this, the programme was convinced to believe that the rights of the VO members would be better protected if the level of legal knowledge of the non-VO members could also be raised. Therefore, the programme, in the recent past, introduced two policies in its agenda so that the rights of the VO members are safeguarded better.

The local community leaders' workshops (LCLW) are organized for the elite³ within the catchment area of the programme. The main objectives of this workshop are to: 1) orient the participants about the laws covered in the HRLE curriculum; 2) inform them that these laws are not contradictory to religious laws (*Shariah*); and 3) facilitate their cooperation in the implementation of HRLE training in the village.

BRAC developed a set of 7 posters to present some of the contents covered by the HRLE training curriculum. These were fixed in VO meeting spots, BRAC schools and field offices, government offices, health centers, and in the bazaars located in administrative town (*unions and thanas*). The short descriptions and translations of the statement put in posters are presented in Box 1.

Some 700,000 posters were fixed in early July 1997. The displaying of the posters immediately faced a good number of undesired social reactions (i.e., backlash). The backlash included verbal condemnation of the posters, tearing off the posters, and organizing demonstration against the posters and BRAC. In addition, BRAC staff were teased, rebuked and physically assaulted for putting up the posters.

The posters are widely used in imparting knowledge and developing desired attitude in the communities. Although it was an effective tool in achieving these objectives earlier (8,9), which in fact encouraged BRAC in fixing the posters, there were occasions when it could not meet the objectives and in some cases their displaying was not even desirable (10,11).

The paper investigated the nature and the cause of backlash against the posters, and in light of that chalked out strategies for smooth

³That is, elected local government officials, chairmen and members of the local administrative units (*union parishad*), preacher of the mosque (*imam*), marriage registrar (*kazi*), primary school teachers, and other opinion leaders.

functioning of the development organizations in the achievement of their objectives.

Box 1. The Human Rights and Legal Education Posters.

Title	Description	Statement
1 Contribution of women to development	Shows that both men and women together participating in the development work, i.e., cutting earth to build a road.	We have built this world and this civilization; men and women contributed equally to it.
2 Child marriage	Points out to a series of undesirable consequences of child marriage – child birth at an early age leading to ill health; for which she fails to carryout family responsibilities; the failure develops a bad relations between her and other members of the family which eventually can result to a divorce.	Many brides are crying because of child marriage; nobody pays attention to the flood of their tears.
3 Violation of multiple marriage policy	Indicates that it is essential for husband to take the approval of existing wife before remarrying. If it is violated he may have to face jail and/or pay a fine.	Facing jail and fine for remarrying without the consent of present wife or for ignoring her disapproval to such marriage.
4 Abuse of women	Abuse of women is a criminal offense; one can be sent to lock-up for such an offense.	Those who torture women, send them to lock-up.
5 Registration of marriage	Indicates that it is important to register marriage as women are often left helpless after divorce.	Husband divorced, what am I to do? Married by reciting <i>kalema</i> ⁴ but without registration.
6 Bride money	Indicates that in case of divorce husband must refund the bride money under any circumstance.	Have to pay the bride money whether dead or alive.
7 Verbal divorce	Indicates that a marriage cannot be canceled by verbally pronouncing divorce three times.	Divorce is not legal if given verbally.

⁴Verses from the Holy Koran recited in conducting a marriage.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study was conducted in August 1997 in the catchments of four BRAC field offices at Kachikata, Sharail, and Kuliarchar. The areas were selected to cover a variety of backlashes.

A checklist was administered in group interviews to collect data. The group interviews included 4-8 interviewees selected purposively who were sufficiently knowledgeable about BRAC posters and backlash. The interviewees represented different sections of the society – BRAC staff at field offices, VO members and their husbands attending monthly VO meetings⁵, people working/living near the spots where posters were fixed, the clergies⁶, and the elite. Four to eight interviews were conducted for each of these sections. The information provided was corroborated through cross checks amongst the groups.

REACTION AGAINST THE POSTERS

After the posters were fixed people from different sections of the society gathered and glanced at the posters. The BRAC logos in the posters helped them figure out that BRAC fixed the posters. A section of the onlookers refrained themselves from passing any opinion on the posters but there were others who did otherwise. A school teacher remarked that the posters pointed out the real problems of the society, and BRAC did a good job by displaying it in posters. On the verbal divorce poster it was remarked that the statement in it was correct and the poster was most important in the set. Contrary to such compliments some reacted negatively. For example, on the same poster it was remarked that the statement was against Islam and BRAC, through the posters, has done a harm to the society.

Within a short while the verbal condemnation gathered storm and turned into organized group reaction against the posters. The backlashes took place mostly in small towns. Three of such backlashes are discussed below.

⁵As a policy the husbands of the VO members were expected to remain present in the monthly meetings held in VOs.

⁶The clergy has been used as a generic term in this study referring to religious officials (*imam*, *muezzin*) authorized to conduct services in the mosques, instructors imparting training on Islamic theology and students undertaking the training in religious schools (*madrasa*).

Case 1

A day after the posters were fixed at Kachikata bazaar a poster on verbal divorce was ripped off after sunset when nobody was around. For about a week after the posters were fixed debate on those continued in tea stalls. The participants were the regular customers of the stall who usually spent their evening there and the local clergies who, unlike the former group, were not regular visitors to the stalls. They discussed each of the posters and placed their arguments both in favour and against. In general the clergies strongly criticized the posters from the Islamic perspective.

A LCL workshop was scheduled in the local BRAC office a week after the posters were fixed. The discussion on posters was an agenda of the workshop. In the workshop BRAC clarified the objectives of the posters and how the message in the posters did not contradict Islam. A local *union parishad* chairman, one of the participants to the workshop, praised BRAC for fixing the posters and asked all present in the workshop to support BRAC's initiative. After this the posters were not publicly criticized in the bazaar, and no adverse reactions against those were noticed.

Case 2

An hour after the posters were fixed in a location in Sharail bazaar the onlookers supporting and opposing the posters started debating on their contents. The debate became heated and at one point turned into a fight. The shopkeepers calmed down the two groups and ripped off the posters fearing that, these if kept intact, would lead to further trouble in the area.

The same evening when BRAC staff were returning to their base through the bazaar observed that a group including clergies was vehemently criticizing the posters in a location where those were fixed. Seeing the BRAC staff they teased them. Some of them even came forward and asked the staff where from they had got the idea that divorce could not be given verbally. The staff avoided them by not responding to their question. Later in the evening a group of clergies visited the house of a staff and rebuked him for fixing the posters.

Next day a number of *imams* and teachers of the *madrassa* met in a mosque after late evening prayer (*Esha*) to discuss and decide on their action against the posters fixed in their town. As decided, a group of *madrassa* students went around early next morning and ripped off the posters on verbal divorce from all the locations in the town.

A set of posters fixed on the lobby of BRAC office however remained intact. The clergies after learning that the posters were still hanging in the lobby decided to take action against the office staff. On receiving this information the BRAC manager proposed to meet the clergies and explain the posters to them. The clergies declined the proposition.

On 15 July 1997, a nationwide lockout (*hartal*) was held to protest the defaming of Prophet Muhammad (SM) in Israel⁷. On that day a group of 40 to 60 *madrasa* students came to the same BRAC office to check whether the office was cooperating to the protest call by keeping it closed. The office manager stopped the group at outer gate of the office. But 5 to 6 of them managed to force themselves into the office building. After seeing the posters at the lobby they remarked that these were against Islam, and objected for having those fixed on the wall. One of them ripped off the poster on verbal divorce. When this was going on in the building the students standing in front of the gate threw stones at the office building. Seeing this, the shopkeepers and college students hanging around in the nearby bazaar came forward and drove the *madrasa* students away from the office.

Case 3

A day after the posters were fixed in Kuliarchar the principal of a local *madrasa* met with two elite (actively affiliated with two major political parties) of the town in a mosque to discuss on the posters. A number of devotees were also present at the spot. They asked the principal for the dictate of the Holy Koran on divorce. The principal when responding to the question remarked that BRAC made a grave sin and offended the Muslims by fixing the posters. He convinced the group that they should stand against any misinterpretation of the Holy Koran and *Hadith*. As a first step it was decided that they would hold a protest rally against the posters in the town next day and take it to the BRAC office.

The decision to hold the rally was later abandoned, but the teachers from the *madrasa* instead filed a 'first information report' against the posters in the police station. Afterwards the officer-in-charge (OC) of the police station and one of the elite with whom the principal had a discussion on previous day, visited the BRAC office. The elite rudely attacked the conduct of the office staff and BRAC's policies. The staff remained calm by not talking back to him. At one point the OC requested the elite submissively to leave the office as he alone was capable to handle the situation. The elite complied with the request. The OC told staff that by fixing the posters they had hurt the religious

⁷The posters of a pig with Muhammad written on it was fixed on the walls of Jerusalem.

sentiments of the town people. He advised them to take off the posters fixed in the town and pacify clergies and local influential through discussion with them. He also warned them that if these were not done the police department would not be able to protect them from any undesirable eventuality against them.

The area manager of BRAC realizing the graveness of the problem asked for the advice from her superior; who instructed her to follow OC's advice. Accordingly, the staff went out to take off all the posters but none were found intact. Not only that, some of the walls where posters were fixed were covered with mud and cow dung. In fact, when OC was in BRAC office a group of *madrassa* students went around the town and ripped off all the posters. Any one around did not resist such an act of the *madrassa* students.

In the same evening a group of BRAC staff met with the clergies. The staff managed to pacify them by mentioning that by fixing the posters they had done a mistake. The staff also conceded to the proposal that in future they would take clergy's permission before fixing any poster in the town.

Who opposed and supported the poster policy?

It is apparent from the above incidences that the clergies were against such poster policy. They were supported by a small group of devout Muslims having shallow knowledge or misconception about Islam had little or no schooling. They were in close contact with the clergies. The clergies against the posters steered up their religious sentiment. A number of ex-VO members of BRAC who were unhappy with the organization also opposed the policy out of their grudge against BRAC⁸.

The group who supported the policy included BRAC field staff, the VO members and their families, and educated section of the community who attended secular school and were below 45 years of age. It was also observed that non-VO members sharing the socioeconomic status of the VO members also came out openly in support of the policy. These groups together constituted the overwhelming majority of the rural set-up and small towns in Bangladesh.

⁸These ex-VO members defaulted in repaying loans that they received from BRAC. Consequently BRAC canceled their VO membership but such an action was not liked by them.

THE RATIONALE FOR OPPOSING AND SUPPORTING THE POSTER POLICY

Both the groups supported and opposed the policy rationalized their respective positions by analyzing the posters, as given below. The rationalization necessarily was not based on correct interpretation of the Holy Koran in all cases. The respondents did not comment on the 'violation of multiple marriage policy' poster.

Poster 1: Contribution of women to development

The group opposing this poster mentioned that Islam recognized equal rights for both male and female but bestowed different responsibilities to each of them. The poster by showing both the genders doing similar kind of work contradicted this dictate of Islam. Besides, the females in the poster were considered to have been drawn obscenely. For these reasons they opposed the poster.

In contrast, those who supported the posters did so because the poster encouraged women to participate in the productive activities which would lead to more income for the family.

Poster 2: Child marriage

In justifying the opposition to this poster it was mentioned that Islam allowed child marriage in special situations -- a father not able to support his daughter can arrange her marriage to an able husband. In support to this argument they cited that one of the wives of Prophet Muhammad (SM) was only 6 years of age at marriage. The poster was considered to have contradicted the dictates of Islam.

The group who supported the poster mentioned that child marriage brings unhappiness in the family. They emphasized that every parent should know the minimum age of marriage. They considered that the poster was an important one in the set as it let people to know that age.

Poster 4: Abuse of women

There was no opposition to this poster and the message was considered significant by all interviewed. But the problem lied with the way the abused woman was drawn in the picture. The clergies strongly objected to drawing of the abused women without sufficiently covering her body in the poster. They considered the poster to be obscene and as such should not have been displayed.

**The seven posters on human
rights and legal education**

The VO members were also of the opinion that the woman was a little under-dressed but did not object to it. Some, however, remarked that the women were abused usually were not given enough saris and blouses to wear so the picture was to the context and there was nothing wrong in displaying the poster.

Poster 5: Registration of marriage

The group opposing the poster mentioned that according to Islam, marriage was conducted by proposing for marriage, acceptance of the proposition and recitation of *kalema*. Registering marriage is not a requirement in conducting marriage. It was thought that the statement in the poster had been so framed that it gave more importance to registration over *kalema*. By making it insignificant or subordinate to registration the poster made mockery of *kalema*. It was also felt that if registration became a part and parcel of a marriage that would mean that all the marriages that took place without registration since the revelation of Islam, were conducted incorrectly. Consequently, the group opposed the poster⁹.

In contrast, other supported the poster because they considered registration of marriage significant as it made divorce difficult. Making divorce difficult would save lot of marriages from breaking-up.

Poster 6: Bride money

The group who opposed the posters forwarded two arguments in support of their decision. A section believed that according to Islam there were circumstances when the wife needed to pay bride money to her husband after divorce. The poster by dealing with the bride money for husband only failed to provide a complete information on the issue as indicated by Islam. The other section was of the opinion that Islam did not say anything about repaying the bride money after divorce. They rejected the poster on the ground that it was not based on the dictate of Koran or Hadith.

The other group considered that bride money could be a big economic help for the divorced women. They considered it important for the rural women to know the laws on bride money. As the poster provided such information the group supported the poster.

⁹Although the group recognized the advantage of documenting marriage but they did not use the word registration.

Poster 7: Verbal divorce

The group who opposed the poster mentioned two technical problems relating to Islam in denying verbal divorce thus they had to oppose the poster.

1. According to the Holy Koran divorce could only be conducted verbally. This means that if it cannot be conducted verbally, the marriage would be left without a scope for conducting divorce. Denying the concept of verbal divorce would also mean denying marriages conducted verbally. This would mean that establishing a marital relationship verbally would be illegal. Denying verbal divorce would also mean that all divorce conducted verbally since the introduction of Islam was illegal.
2. Since verbal divorce was acceptable according to Islam, marital relationship after such divorce would be tantamount to adultery and children born out of such relationship would be illegitimate. They felt that the poster stating that divorce could not be given verbally was, in fact, encouraging marital relationships after such divorce.

The group supporting the posters felt that abolishing verbal divorce would make divorce difficult and less frequent than it was happening. By making it so, lot of families could be saved from breaking-up and from its evil consequences, viz., economic hardship for the divorced wife and her children as in many cases she was left without an earner in the family.

THE REACTION OF BRAC AGAINST THE BACKLASH

The poster policy brought both VO members and the others in the community under the scope of HRLE programme. The posters intended to empower them with legal knowledge. For a policy having such an involvement it was not unlikely that there would be a section in the society who would not appreciate and would oppose the policy.

BRAC's reactions to the backlashes were pragmatic. It reacted differentially to the backlash depending upon their nature. They did not make any effort to prevent the ripping off of the posters. It was assumed that such an effort would have flared the intensity of the opposition and put BRAC in the fire.

The staff attempted in holding meetings with those opposing the posters to explain the objectives and meanings of the posters. Where the meetings could be held the effort produced desired result. There were

also cases where meeting could not be held because the party opposing the poster did not cooperate to such an effort.

In a situation where severe opposition was encountered staff compromised by surrendering to the apparent interest of those who opposed the policy. Such a decision was taken to avoid immediate harm to BRAC activities and for the success of the policy in the long run.

THE CAUSES FOR BACKLASH AGAINST THE POSTERS

The diagnosis of the backlash indicated that there were three reasons, somewhat overlapping each other, that led the clergies to react against the posters.

Conclusion derived based on different perspectives

The past experience, self interest and organizational objectives to which they were affiliated were some of the factors that influenced the decision on the posters. Since the groups supporting and opposing the posters differed on these issues it was likely that they would take different stands on the posters.

BRAC initiated the posters with a view to bring a positive change in the society by ending number of unjust practices (i.e., social problems) in the society. It believed that the end to such practices would not in any way contradict with the dictates of Islam. The group supporting the policy emphasized on the practical implication of the posters. They evaluated the posters based on the extent these were considered relevant to the day-to-day problems and their solutions. Besides, the group was concerned with whether the laws of Bangladesh were properly reflected not so much as whether the posters contradicted the dictates of Islam. In fact, they analyzed the content of the posters from a secular perspective independent of their religious belief.

The clergies took the statements in the posters literally and then investigated whether those contradicted with the dictates of the Holy Koran and the practices in the Islamic world both at present and in the past. After such a scrutiny they concluded that some of the posters were not befitting to the dictates of the Islam and in fact were a threat to existing Islamic practices in the society.

The clergies, because of their training and profession being involved with religion, liked to see that the society functions as per the dictates of Islam. The introduction of any new idea or practice in the society considered not according to Islam or threat to existing Islamic

practices was likely to be resisted. Some remarks from the group discussion may be quoted here: *"It is our moral obligation to preserve Islamic values in the society. The posters attacked the iman (belief) of those having it, thus we had to stand against it."*

Encroachment in professional territory

The clergies were well aware of the fact that they were the only group in the society with formal training on Islam. This developed an impression in them that they were also the group to deal competently with the issues related to Islam. Psychologically they developed a territory for their professional activities. The development of such a tendency is not unusual as like many animals the social groups have the tendency to possess, acquire or preserve territory and territorial rights (12). Thus, it is quite likely that the groups representing organizations may have conflicting relations on the scope of the organizational activities.

We noticed that a number of issues the posters dealt with, like marriage, divorce, etc., had religious connotations. For that the clergies considered that the issue fell under their professional domain. In their own words: *"The marriage and divorce is decided according to Islam, thus it is only us who have the right to say anything on these issues."* Finding BRAC dealing with these issues the clergies considered it an intrusion in their professional domain. Thus, they reacted against the posters to protect their territory and territorial right.

Upholding socioeconomic interest

There were also socioeconomic reasons that prompted clergies to oppose the posters. The respondents noticed that after a verbal divorce, the husband usually became repentant and intended to reunite with the divorcee, who were also willing for such a reunion. For this reunion it is customary to conduct *hilla-nikah*¹⁰. To make the reunion socially acceptable without going through *hilla-nikah* the separated couple needs the help of the clergies. After receiving money the clergy makes a public statement (usually in a village court) that when the husband pronounced verbal divorce he was not with a sound mind therefore, the divorce was not valid and their reunion without *hilla-nikah* would not be a violation of any Islamic code. After the announcement the couple reunites. The VO members were of the opinion that the poster on verbal divorce would gradually stop this practice, in which case the clergies would be deprived of an income.

¹⁰ A matrimonial dictate on the reunion of the divorced couple. The wife needs to marry another person, live together with him for a minimum of four months, get divorced and then remarry the previous husband with whom the reunion is intended.

Besides, the abolishing of verbal divorce would mean that the role of clergies in relation to a marital problem (i.e., verbal divorce) would become obsolete. Consequently there would be a decline in their functional importance in the society. Apprehending such a possibility arising from the poster and for protecting their interest they opposed the policy. It is likely that the group that will loose due to a change will resist the change agent stubbornly (13).

BRAC through its activities intends to empower the poor which in turn affects the existing power structure (14). The clergies are often part of this power structure in villages and small towns. The poster programme in the process of empowering the poor concomitantly de-empowers the clergies socioeconomically. Such implications of the programme were likely to destabilize clergies' position in the existing power structure. The BRAC's catalytic role to such a change prompted religious organizations to react against it.

STRATEGY FOR SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

It appeared that the police department was under the influence of the local power structure to serve their purposes. It was not respectful to the legitimate and justified development effort of BRAC. The shopkeepers and college students in Sharail (Case 2) supported BRAC when *madrassa* students attacked the office, as most of its staff were personally known to them and had positive opinion about BRAC. They wanted no harm done to BRAC. But their support towards BRAC was not without a reservation as some of these shopkeepers ripped off the posters to avoid further trouble in their area.

Although there were more in support of the posters than those opposing it, the ripping off the posters were not resisted in any way, even where it was done in broad day light in public place (Case 3). Besides the indifference of police department to development and the reservation of those supporting the policy indicated that it was not difficult to foil the development initiative by an organized few in the community. To ensure smooth functioning of development organization number of strategies may be recommended based on this study.

The resistance resulting from due to deriving conclusions based on different premises can be resolved or minimized by establishing effective communication between development and other organizations offering resistance. The development organizations may explain their objectives and mode of action to the society ahead of time to clarify their position. Through dialogue the illusion about the development

organization should be removed from the parties opposing the programme or assumed would oppose the programme after it would be launched. Although a little late, BRAC correctly made an effort to establish a dialogue with the clergies, thus could avoid the backlash get further intense in some of the areas, e.g., Kachikata (Case 1). Similar effort in the case of Sharail (Case 2) went in vain.

The programme with a holistic approach to development is likely to cut across the territorial boundaries of other organizations in the society. But one can enter to the territory of another only through invitation as nobody likes to see that their territory gets crowded (12). The opposition resulting from the infringement of the boundary may be minimized by incorporating the opposing organizations fully or partially to the formulation and/or implementation of the programme of the development organization. In adopting this strategy care should be taken so that the incorporation of another organization does not dilute the objectives of the development organization. Positive relationship is likely to develop among groups when both working for common goal (15). BRAC's decision to contact with the clergies and elite on finalizing and fixing posters in future in Kuliarchar (Case 3) was a process of including the group opposing the posters into the activities of HRLE programme.

As an alternative or a supplement to above strategies the development organization may convince and mobilize the support of the influential in the community to its cause. The strategy can be effected, as we have seen in Kachikata (Case 1) when chairman of the *union parishad* advised the participants in the LCL workshop to cooperate with BRAC, the policy did not face any opposition in the area.

In those cases where the loss of socioeconomic interest is a cause for the resistance it is likely that so long the interest is being hampered the group affected would oppose the development organization. In such a situation, measures should be taken so that the group being affected may not have an issue to form resistance against the development organizations. The development organization should make an assumption about other organizations functioning in the society from which it would probably face resistance and the nature of resistance that would be offered by those organizations. Based on these assumptions the organization should tune up its objective but without dilating it. For example, the statement on verbal divorce in a poster, i.e., 'divorce is not legal if given verbally' could have been formulated as 'according to the laws in Bangladesh divorce is not legal if given verbally'. In that case, the poster could not have been made a protest issue by linking it to Islam but probably would have served the objective of the poster.

The development organization may form an alliance of the groups supporting the cause of development. It was observed that the clergies were not homogeneous in their belief and action as there were some who considered verbal divorce incorrect (16). The clergies and elite supporting the cause of development may be included in the alliance. The alliance particularly if it is substantially big is likely to work as a discouragement for the opposing organizations to take any action against the development effort. Besides, the alliance may put up a joint resistance against the opposing organization.

The past experience indicates that the development organizations often face resistance by others in the society. It is likely that there will be a section in the society which will not appreciate the endeavor of the development organization in bringing change in the society. The resistance that the development organization faces in engineering the society for the welfare of its people should not be underestimated. These organizations that make themselves effective, should chalk out strategies to ensure that the resistance can be avoided while formulating the development programmes.

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