

MANAGING NGOs FOR GROWTH AND CHANGE

A Case Study of Proshika in Bangladesh

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADAB	Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADC	Area Development Centre
AKFC	Aga Khan Foundation Canada
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSC	Credit and Savings Coordinator
CUP	Coordination of the Urban Poor
CUSO	Canadian University Services Overseas
DEW	Development Education Worker
EDW	Economic Development Worker
GNCC	Government NGO Coordination Committee
GRCC	Gender Relations Coordination Cell
HRDC	Human Resource Development Centre (at Koitta)
IDPAA	Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy
IDPM	Institute for Development Policy Management at Manchester, UK
IMEC	Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Cell
LSHTM	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
NFP	Non Formal Primary (school)
PKSF	Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation
Proshika MUK	Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra
REM	Research, Evaluation and Monitoring
SAP	South Asian Partnership
SAPRI	Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative
SLDP	Smallowners Livestock Development Programme
TC	Training Coordinator
TCC	Thana Coordination Committee
UCC	Union Coordination Committee
UP	Union Parishad
UPDP	Urban Poor Development Programme
URCI	Univesity Research Cooperation International, Maryland, USA
VCC	Village Coordination Committee
ZC	Zonal Coordinator

Managing NGOs for Growth and Change : A Case Study of Proshika in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in South Asian countries have attained phenomenal growth, more so in Bangladesh. There has been manifold increase in the number of NGOs, their staff and operational budget. NGO programmes have also undergone rapid expansion. These organisations are however, facing difficulties in administering their diverse programmes and managing a diverse range of staff. A study was conducted on Proshika, a large NGO in Bangladesh, to examine how it has attained growth and handled management challenges. The study themes included (a) organisation and performance, (b) strategy, (c) participation, (d) leadership and succession, (e) gender, and (f) learning. Proshika works with 1.4 million rural and urban poor and operates wide range of programmes which include social mobilization, education, credit, employment and income generation, health and sanitation, housing, social forestry, ecological agriculture, policy advocacy, etc. Over the last ten years (1989-1998) there has been fantastic growth of Proshika as an organisation. The number of its programme participants increased by 350%, staff size rose by 460%, and there has been 40-fold increase of its operational budget during this period. Generous donors' support, continuing efforts in capacity development, staff motivation and incentives, and participatory approach to development contributed largely to the scaling-up in Proshika. The study reveals that Proshika has so far managed its growth well. The founder leader has been providing good leadership which helped Proshika to get over an initial split of the organisation and develop it from a small-scale into a big multifaceted organisation. But rapid growth has put strains on the management structures and systems. According to one recent review, overloads are becoming excessive. Rapid growth has also made a dent on the senior management which is overstretched and often uses 'crisis management approach' to major issues rather than strategic management.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the research

The non-governmental organisations (NGO) in Bangladesh have attained phenomenal growth over the last three decades. The NGO sector has also created a positive impact in many other South Asian countries. The number of NGOs has increased manifold. NGO programmes have covered all sectors of development and have reached all parts of the country. These thriving organisations are however, facing difficulties in administering diverse programmes and managing a diverse range of staff. Changes occurring in the internal and external environment have also created new challenges for many of these organisations. Despite the challenges, a number of NGOs have “successfully overcome these to grow and thrive.”¹

In this context, Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) established a South Asian NGO Development Research Programme in consultation with some South Asian NGO leaders and experts in 1994. The research programme aimed to examine some of the key challenges facing the South Asian NGOs. The focus of this research was on management challenges, i.e., how the NGOs address the management perspectives as they handled growth and coped with the changes. Ten NGOs from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan were selected to participate in this research. Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra, or Proshika: a Centre for Human Development, was one of them.

Objective and design of the study

The objectives and design of the NGO management research were determined in a workshop held in Lahore in October 1997. The workshop was participated by the researchers sponsored by the participating NGOs, three international experts, and members of the project steering committee which included the CEO of AKFC. It was decided that a common set of objectives and methodologies would be used for studying all the NGOs and that the research would be designed to “document, distill and disseminate the lessons from successful NGO initiatives.”²

¹ Managing for Growth and Change : NGO Development Research Project, Revised Research Manual : January, 1998. AKFC, Ottawa, P.2

² Ibid, p.2

II. PROSHIKA : THE ORGANISATION AND PROGRAMMES

In retrospect

Following the independence of Bangladesh in December 1971, a large number of international NGOs and voluntary groups came to Bangladesh. These organisations were mainly working in the area of relief and rehabilitation. The Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) was one such organisation which set up a logistic centre to initiate its work. CUSO selected a team of local university graduates to work with its unit, and most of the team members were freedom fighters imbued with the spirit of the war of independence. They were known as CUSO 'volunteers'. Working with CUSO, the youths had an opportunity to get some insight about the rural life, socio-economic situation and the rural power structure. They realised that mainstream development was bypassing the rural poor who constituted the majority of the country's population. They also felt that a search for alternative development strategies was necessary to realise the goal of independence. The founder and present President of Proshika was one of the CUSO 'volunteers'.

During 1973-74 CUSO started thinking of giving up its volunteer based programme and starting a new strategy for working with the poor. They decided to build a local organisation with the existing CUSO volunteers who would ultimately run and manage the organisation. Thus Proshika was set up in 1976. Proshika is the Bengali acronym of three Bengali terms which stand for 'training', 'education' and 'work'. Gradually the programmes of this new organisation expanded. By the end of 1980, Proshika was operating its programmes from two regions, managed by two regional coordinators who were free to a large extent to run the activities in their own regions. **In 1981 Proshika split up into two independent organisations** as the two coordinators did not see eye to eye on some ideological and strategic issues. One Proshika thus became two independent NGOs. **This study is on the new Proshika, which was named "Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra" or Proshika : A Centre for Human Development.**

Splitting up of an NGO into two independent organisations is a rare thing in Bangladesh. But it happened in the case of Proshika. Some lessons can be learnt from this event. The two regional coordinators enjoyed a lot of autonomy, and there was paralysed leadership. Also there were some ideological differences between them. But the management at the top was either oblivious of the situation or unwilling to bind the two coordinators together under a unified command. It may so happen that the expatriate CUSO mentor thought it better to run the work through two independent organisations under the leadership of two coordinators.

Proshika : The Organisation

Today *Proshika is one of the largest non governmental development organisations (NGOs) in Bangladesh*. Starting on a learning mode with a lot of flexibility in programming, the organisation has set up multi-sectoral programmes in different fields of development. A recent review made by a team of international experts provides a good description about this organization : "Over the last 20 years Proshika has evolved from a small-scale, locally-based, rural action research adhocacy into a large organization with formal structures, a complex set of programmes, a dispersed field staff, an urban programme, and strong international linkages."⁴

Mission

The organisational beliefs, values and development philosophy are reflected in **the mission of the organisation :**

Proshika envisages a Bangladesh society which is economically productive and equitable, socially just, environmentally sound and genuinely democratic. Its mission is to conduct an extensive and intensive participatory development process through empowerment of the poor. Its objectives include : (i) achieving structural poverty alleviation, (ii) environmental protection and regeneration (iii) improvement in women's status, (iv) increasing people's participation in public institutions, and (v) increasing people's capacity to gain and exercise democratic and human rights (Annual Report, 1992-93).

The mission statement of the organisation has changed over the years, but the inner essence or nuclei of the mission has remained the same. So is the philosophy of Proshika which has remained the same over the years. The philosophy is empowerment through human development. The development approach of Proshika which throws light on the subsequent strategies emanated from its mission. **The crust of the mission is simply to empower the poor socially, economically and also politically.** To achieve that the organisation has adopted a two-fold development strategy. First, to organise and mobilise the poor in order for them to assert their own rights and resist oppressions and social injustices. Secondly, to undertake economic programmes supported by credit and self-employment for the poor to become economically self-reliant. **Proshika envisages a combined strategy where social and economic empowerment of rural and urban poor, both men and women, is equally emphasized.**

Proshika activities are particularly focused on some specific areas : human development, mobilization and empowerment of the poor, conscientisation and organisation development, participatory development, and environmental issues. The programmes are

⁴ Proshika Poverty Alleviation, Phase V : Mid Term Review, Volume I (Main Report). Dhaka : November, 1997, p.XI.

discussed in detail, in the following pages. The following chart presents a bird's-eye view of Proshika giving some figures about its programme participants, programme coverage, staff and finance. There has been a big scaling up in Proshika which is evident from table 1 and 2 in the following page.

PROSHIKA AT A GLANCE*
As of December 1997 (unless indicated otherwise)

Villages covered	10,671
Slums covered	767
Thanas covered	172
Primary Groups (PG) Female : 38,910 Male : 29,987 PG Membership Female : 698,202 Male : 598,720	74,301 1,409,774
Adult literacy graduates (up to March '98) NFP schools (March '98) NFP students graduated NFP school (current enrollment) Girls : 108,600 Boys : 86,216	401,474 7,234 127,922 194,816
Ecological agriculture (EA) Members involved Land under EA (acres)	158,740 57,102
Social forestry Trees planted (in million) Area covered (acres) Public forest management (acres)	70 32,627 32,058
Hand tubewells installed Low cost sanitary latrines installed	17,286 167,863
People trained in HD & skills (formal & non-formal) in million	2.5
House constructed for the poor	30,504
Total amount of loan disbursed (Tk. in million)	5,412
Full time staff (as of January '98) Annual budget 1998-'99 (Tk. in million)	3,319 5,210

* Selected items/activities

Continuing growth

Proshika has attained continuing growth in terms of its development centres, programme participants and staff members (Table 1). The growth has been rapid in the last ten years. The number of primary groups and staff members increased by over 350 and 460 percent respectively in this time.

Table 1: Growth of staff and groups (for the last ten years)

Year (July-June)	Staff Strength		No. of Area Development Centre	No. of Primary Group	
	Total	Women		Total	Women
1989-90	694	106	44	21,322	10,543
1990-91	809	149	49	23,936	12,069
1991-92	1047	197	50	25,822	13,141
1992-93	1206	218	53	29,573	15,253
1993-94	1420	253	67	38,720	20,494
1994-95	1625	330	78	44,198	23,724
1995-96	2225	607	104	52,333	28,843
1996-June'97	2988	779	115	68,575	38,789
Up to Dec.'97	3214	852	121	74,301*	42,308

* Total member of the primary groups : 1,409,774

There has also been fantastic growth (forty-time increase) in Proshika's operational budget during the last ten years (Table 2). Donors have been quite liberal in offering financial support to Proshika programmes. Some new initiatives have also been undertaken during this period.

Table 2: Yearly budget of Proshika (for the last ten years)

Financial Year (July to June)	Amount (in taka)
1989-90	134,769,641
1990-91	197,752,918
1991-92	294,872,941
1992-93	440,054,816
1993-94	582,939,677
1994-95	1,118,307,111
1995-96	1,554,459,449
1996-97	2,179,066,668
1997-98	3,300,688,165
1998-99	5,209,873,726

US \$ 1 = Tk. 46.50 (as of January 1998)

Proshika programmes

Proshika operates a wide range of field level activities in both rural and urban areas as well as a number of central level activities (advocacy, communications, research, internet service, and assistance to other organisations). The field programmes cover various sectors of development. Its current programmes include (a) People's Organisation, (b) Development Education, (c) People's Theatre, (d) Universal Education, (e) Employment and Income Generating Activities, (f) Irrigation, (g) Livestock Development, (h) Fisheries, (i) Sericulture, (j) Apiculture, (k) Environmental Protection and Regeneration, (l) Ecological Agriculture, (m) Social Forestry, (n) Housing, (o) Health Education and Infrastructure Building, (p) Urban Poor Development, (q) Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy, (r) Disaster Management and (s) Development Support Communication. A brief description of some of the selected programmes and their progress is presented here.

As of December 1997, Proshika was working with some 1.3 million rural and urban poor through 121 of its Area Development Centres (ADCs) and 654 urban slums. The ADCs are mostly situated at the *thana* (sub district) level. Proshika works in over 10,600 villages of 172 *thanas* in the rural part of Bangladesh.

By the end of 1997, Proshika organised about 1.3 million rural and urban poor. This implies that the organisation has reached around equal number of households. However, some of them are not active members. A total of taka 3,959 million has been disbursed to group members as credit for employment and income generating activities. It has also provided both formal and informal training, to 2.5 million members in different subjects.

Under its Environmental Protection and Regeneration Programme, 70 million trees were planted and nearly 74,000 acres of land were brought under ecological agriculture. More than some 270,000 farmers are reportedly practicing ecological agriculture.

Through its Health Infrastructure Building Programme, about 17,000 hand tubewells and 168,000 low-cost sanitary latrines have been installed. The organisation has so far built 30,500 houses for the poor.

Proshika has opened nearly 18,000 adult literacy centres. Around 355,000 adults have so far graduated from these centres. The organisation has also set up some 4,000 non-formal primary schools which now enrol over 194,000 children. Each adult literacy course is of six

months duration, the non-formal schools cover the five year primary education in three calendar years.

The following timeline provides a brief view of some important Proshika activities, projects and programmes as and when these were initiated.

Timeline : Major Events

1976	Proshika founded. Training in skills development and health initiated. Loan was given without any service charge
1977	A core training team of 12 women formed.
1978	Apiculture and organic agriculture project piloted. Popular theatre introduced
1980	Landless irrigation programme initiated
1981	Action research programme initiated
1982	Women's programme and participatory research introduced
1983	Social forestry programme introduced
1984	Sericulture programme revived. Production of sanitary latrines started
1985	Adult literacy and children's school programme introduced Group members involved in forest protection programme
1986	Development support communications programme initiated
1989	Low cost durable house building programme introduced Research, evaluation and monitoring formed as a separate cell
1990	'Participatory Video' and Urban Poor Development Programme and initiated
1992-93	Non formal primary schools opened
1994	Material development cell for education programme established
1993- 94	Training on chemical treatment of bamboo and wood for low cost durable housing started
1994-95	A new housing technology with micro concrete roofing tiles introduced A woman's coordination unit formed to facilitate career development of women staff
1994	Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy established
1995	Impact assessment of Proshika done
1995-96	Women's coordination unit renamed as Gender Relations Coordination Cell

Building organisations of the poor

Proshika programmes are targeted to the poor who include the landless, marginal and small farmers. Initially all Proshika activities were confined to the rural area. In 1990

Proshika entered the urban sector through the initiation of its Urban Poor Development Programme.

Proshika starts working in an area with a survey and thereafter a primary group is formed. There are separate groups for men and women. Male groups consist of 25-30 members while women's groups comprise 20-25 members each. Persons who are landless or land poor with not more than 50/100 decimal of land, and those selling four months of labour a year are eligible for membership. The criteria for becoming members have remained the same over the years.

Since 1983 primary groups undertaking income generating projects have formed an executive team of four (4) constituted by and from amongst the members. The team comprises a president, a vice president, a cashier and a secretary. They are elected by their group members. Later, an additional person, i.e. another secretary was added to the executive team. The president takes the leader's role and conducts meetings, while the cashier keeps the project accounts and reports to the group for information and approval.

Proshika is committed to alleviate poverty and empower the poor. Developing the organisations of the poor is a strategy to achieve this goal. In recent times the non-poor have also found their place in these organisations. As the 1997 donors' review has observed:

"Primary groups are found to be more heterogeneous (both between and within PGs) than has been previously reported. Members are mainly poor people but also include a limited portion of the hardcore poor and non-poor. There is a concern that the push to enlarge the PGs will make it more difficult for poorer people to join a PG."⁵

Federating the groups

Federating the primary groups at higher levels beyond the village has been an important strategy of Proshika. The primary focus of federation building empowering the poor. This strategy is likely to have wider impact in the long term. Indications are that many members of primary groups will take a more active role in social and political activity.

In 1980, just as the primary groups were becoming more and more active, the need for inter group communication and linkages emerged. The need for functioning in a broader social

⁵ Mid Term Review, Main Report, Vol. I. November 1997, p.i

and economic perspective was also felt. To respond to these needs all the groups in a village formed into a new forum called 'village coordination committee' (VCC). The VCCs held regular meetings. The meetings provided the groups with the opportunity to deal with problems which were beyond the scope of a single group. This broader organisation, i.e. the VCC, was strengthened gradually and took a formal shape in 1981-82.

As more groups were organised and VCCs started operating, another new forum was created at a higher level with representatives of primary groups of different villages, called Union Coordination Committee (UCC). This forum helped building confidence among the group members to face tougher issues such as social and economic injustices, resistance to beating of landless members by the local elites, with-holding or under-payment of wages, the issue of low wages, occupation of *khas* land, etc.

Proshika facilitated the formation of a more broad based inter-union forum at the *Thana* (sub-district) level in 1996 which was represented by members of the UCCs. This forum is known as *Thana* Coordination Committee (TCC). Through these three vertically higher fora, the poor have been able to address wider issues, like winning social justices and asserting rights, recapturing illegally and/or forcibly occupied lands, challenging malpractice and corruption, and extending mutual help and cooperation. There is a likelihood that members of TCCs will form a still wider committee at the district level. Leaders of the broader organisations are all elected. The VCC consists of representatives of each primary group. The UCCs and TCCs in turn are comprised elected representatives of VCCs and UCCs respectively.

The federation system is bringing a new dynamic into local politics in some areas, particularly for women. The inter-village and inter-union fora have been found to be useful in empowering the poor. As Proshika's mid term review has found:

*"The federation system was found to be working well and has encouraged many PG members to take a more active role in social and political activity. It also provides a rare forum for men and women to mix, on more equal terms than is usual, in Bangladesh."*⁶

Programme development : participatory planning

Proshika's programme planning started in an informal way, but gradually it has taken a formal shape and a rigorous process. Passing through a two year, then three year and ultimately a five year phase, the organisation has acquired good acumen in long term planning. Its recently finalised Phase VI (1999-2004) plan document is as voluminous as the national five year plan. Increasingly planning is consuming more time and money.

⁶ Ibid., p. i

Proshika programmes have been planned in a phased way. Initially programmes were planned for two years, then for three years, and presently for five years. CUSO provided Proshika with a start-up fund of 300,000 Canadian dollar. It started with a two year phase as the first formal funding which came from the Canadian International Development Agency (Canadian dollar 275,000) was for two year (1983-84). The next two year planning undertook phase II: 1983-85. The organisation then went for a three year planning (phase III: 1986-88). This was followed by a five year planning (1989-1994). The organisation shifted to a five year planning because longer time was required for planning exercises involving people's participation. The group members were involved and their inputs incorporated in planning at this stage which demanded greater time for plan formulation.

The fifth phase (1994-99) has seen the formation of a consortium of donors. With more donors coming on board, the necessity for formalities also began to grow. Logical Framework Analysis was introduced which is considered a useful tool by the organisation. Participatory planning involving the beneficiary group came in a prominent way from this phase. The organisation used Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) as a planning tool.

Public attention and public discussion of its plan projects has ushered in a new feature of Proshika strategy. In 1998 the organization finalised its phase VI plan (1999-2004), and presented it in a specially organised forum attended by journalists, academics, NGO representatives and members of the civil society. The overt objective was to demonstrate the participatory mode of work, openness and transparency of the organization. It is for the first time in Bangladesh that an NGO presented its plan and sources of fund for public discussion.

The organisation has introduced new programmes or new components from time to time. In 1990 Proshika set up one new development programme -- Urban Poor Development Programme which ushered in a new era for working in the urban area. The other is an institutional mechanism named Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy (IDPAA) setup in 1994. Policy analysis and advocacy has emerged as a distinct activity of Proshika, more so in the recent years. IDPAA is regarded as a vital instrument for the purpose. The IDPAA is designed to facilitate (a) "analysing existing policies and formulating proposals for new policies" and (b) providing "systematic advocacy interventions for the creation of a micro policy environment committed to the eradication of poverty and promotion of sustainable development in Bangladesh."⁷ Proshika is attempting to institutionalise its development interventions in the policy analysis and policy advocacy area.

⁷ Mainstreaming Policy Advocacy : Activity Report, July 1996 to June 1997. Dhaka : IDPAA at Proshika (1997), pp.1-4.

III. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governance

Proshika is governed by a Governing Body which is selected by a general body. Since the inception of Proshika there has been a General Body comprising of lawyers, doctors and other members of the society. The General Body consists of 31 members which include several founding members of Proshika. The members of the General Body have remained the same over the past 21 years. No new members have been co-opted till date. However there is a provision for including new members as and when deemed necessary. Policies as well as strategic plans have to be approved by the General Body.

The General Body selects the Governing Body in its annual general meeting through an electoral process. The Governing Body of Proshika is made up of nine members including one NGO leader, one lawyer and three founding members of Proshika, namely the President, and two Vice-Presidents (Annexure-2). The President of Proshika is the chairman of the Governing Body. The Governing Body is concerned more with making macro policy of the organisation. It also provides operational policies whenever needed. The Body ratifies the five year and annual plans of Proshika. The Governing Body meets three to four times a year.

One thing that strikes an observer is the composition of the Governing Body. The President is the CEO of Proshika, and is entrusted with the task of overall management of the organisation. He is also the chairperson of the Governing Body which is a policy making body. Governance and management are two distinct functions and different types of activities. Two Vice Presidents who are holding high management responsibilities and holding very strategic positions are also permanent members of the Governing Body.

People at the top management of Proshika assert that there "have been some compelling reasons for vesting in the same person responsibilities of both governance and management" and that "this tradition has endured over the years and has contributed to a phenomenal growth of the organization."⁸

Management

Proshika management is structured and decentralised. The overall responsibility of managing the organisation rests with the Executive Director (now designated as the

⁸ Proshika's feedback on the initial draft of this report

President) who executes all programmes, projects and policies. The President has a very wide range of management and other responsibilities. He directly oversees the rural field operations which is headed by a Deputy Director. All development projects and programmes are implemented through a field operation unit named Area Development Centre (ADC). The field programmes are the core of all Proshika activities that involve the group members, i.e. beneficiaries of development programmes. The Urban Poor Development Programme (UPDP) is a new project, beginning in 1990, which has fewer components while the rural programme has a large number of activity components. The UPDP is managed by one Deputy Director and overseen by the Senior Vice President. The organogram provides the management structure of Proshika in detail (Annex-1).

The overall management style of Proshika is participatory. At the ADC level many decisions regarding programme operation are adopted through discussions with the field staff. At the apex level a two day joint conference of all the ADC Coordinators (presently 121) is held once in every three month which is participated by the President and other top management. Many of the organisational policies are formulated through joint deliberations of the field managers and top management.

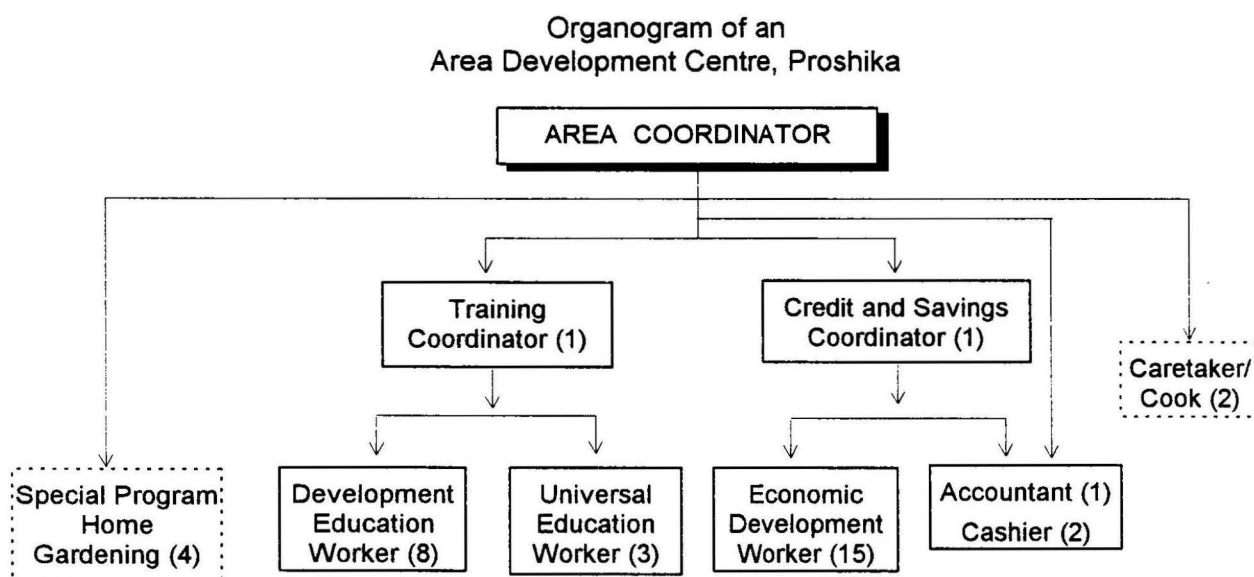
The Proshika management is decentralised. Responsibility of implementing the programmes is well defined, both at the head office and field level. Managers and Activity Coordinators are responsible for executing their specific annual plans. They are supported with necessary resources to carry out their work.

Area Development Centre

Area Development Centres are local Proshika offices at the *thana* level. ADC is the nucleus of all field-level activities and base of programme operation. It is also the centre of developing annual plans in association with the Groups. There is also a training facility at the ADC for members and grassroot level workers. The Area Coordinator is responsible for planning and operating the training programmes at the ADC level.

Each ADC is headed by an Area Coordinator who works with a team of specialised staff, namely Credit and Savings Coordinator (CSC), Training Coordinator (TC), and grassroot level staff, namely Development Education Worker (DEW), Development Worker (DW), Universal Education Worker (UEW), Economic Development Worker (EDW), and others (see organogram). This team of staff is the first line management and has direct

communication and interaction with the rural poor. They are considered the key personnel in programme operation. Each staff in this team is supported and guided by their respective Activity Coordinators at the HO. Each Activity Coordinator at the HO has a team of specialists, who primarily support the field activities through coordinating training, collaborating and resource management.



Notes:

- This ADC was set up in 1978.
- Figures in parentheses indicate number of staff.
- Special programmes are in operation in some selected ADCs.

Area Coordinators are reportable to a Zonal Coordinator (ZC). Each ZC oversees 3/4 ADCs. A Zonal Coordinator is mobile and stationed in one of the ADCs. S/he is a field based staff. The 2/3 ZCs are in turn reportable to the Central Coordinators, who are HO based. The Central Coordinators report to the Principal Programme Coordinator who have currently designated as Deputy Directors.

Group members helping in programme operation

Proshika pursues a people-intensive approach rather than a staff-intensive approach. It implies that over time the group members would take increased responsibilities and gradually the responsibilities of the staff will decrease. Selective group members are given a 6 day formal training and some informal village based training for the purpose. These

training aims at value and awareness development. From the selective groups more advanced members are trained and developed "as resource persons" who in turn conduct both informal trainings for other group members. The resource persons are given some remuneration. There are resource persons for different programmes.

Group members are also encouraged to help non-members to join Proshika in accordance to the criteria set by the organisation. Thus staff functions have decreased in organisation development. Presently the field staffs are also relieved of loan collection work. It is the representatives of group members who come to ADC and give it. It is generally seen that the older an Area the less the work of a staff. The workload of a staff decreases when the Area is old and increases when the Area is new. These approaches have reduced operational costs to some extent.

Human resource management

Staff recruitment and retention: In the initial years of Proshika, most of the staff recruited had a minimum qualification of (Secondary School Certificate (SSC). Staff with technical know-how were quite rare. One staff used to oversee all activities in general. Priority was given to people who were committed and had experience of organisation building capacity, (i.e., youth clubs, groups and others). As projects started expanding, the management found that it required certain specialized/technical skills in fisheries, livestock, agriculture, and so forth. From 1988-89 more technically qualified people were recruited, and the minimum qualification was raised to a bachelor's degree. At the beginning jobs were not advertised. Now jobs are mostly advertised in national daily newspapers. There are cases when it was locally advertised and local recruits were taken, for example, when recruiting female accountants.

The recruitment policy was framed in 1981 and updated in 1996. It is still in effect. After recruitment of the field staff members are stationed either in their home town or nearby areas. This policy has proved more effective for retaining women staff to a certain extent.

Turnover: In the 70's and 80's there was hardly any staff turnover. However, the 90s in general saw the rising trend in turnover. Particularly for retaining specialised staff. In response, the organisation adapted certain strategies. At the field level few specialized persons were recruited, and the professionals transferred their skills to the general staff through training. This, in the process, enabled the general staff to develop their skills. A

similar strategy was adopted in case of researchers, where the turnover was also high. Some staffs were appointed on a regular basis. But in a lot of cases, instead of appointing a permanent researcher, Proshika commissions out research work or undertakes joint research.

Staff: There is also high turnover amongst the women staff. In the initial years there were very few women candidates since they were not faring well in the written tests. Later a policy was adopted where the qualifying mark for women was lowered to 45, (for men it remained at 50) and more women started applying and getting through.

In 1989 a new transfer policy came into being with the hope of retaining the female staff. According to this policy, women staffs were transferred either to or near their home districts. However, this strategy did not solve the problem of drop-outs.

Developing women as managers

The representation of women amongst senior management of Proshika is still quite low. In response, a pilot project was undertaken to recruit women at different levels of management, and provided with training to equip them for higher responsibilities as managers.

Staff development: At first all field based staff were considered 'development worker' (DW). Presently every staff has to do all kinds of work for the first two years. A new staff, received a three day orientation. Within 3 months of recruitment every staff had to undergo a 13 day foundation course. This course contained Proshika's vision, mission, strategy, goals and objectives. All staffs go through three courses on human development after recruitment. Later they received more training relevant to their respective work.

There are also strategic management courses for Area Coordinators, Zonal Coordinators and 'tomorrow's managers' who are the potential EDWs and DEWs. Strategic management courses contain topics such as development management, strategic planning, strategic management, and other related matters. With the passage of time, foreign training for the staff has become a regular feature. It is mainly the mid-level functionaries with potentials who are sent abroad for specialised training.

Staff assessment and promotion: Initially the Area Coordinators informally evaluated the performance of their field staff and forwarded the same to senior management. In 1985 there were about 300 staff. An informal policy of promotion used to be followed. Usually promotion was permissible after every two years. The President of the organisation himself used to handle each promotion case. From end of 1994, a formal system of performance evaluation was introduced. This evaluation is done quarterly. Prior to 1994, a staff was evaluated once every 2/3 years.

From 1996 the organisation moved into a monthly assessment policy. Earlier assessment was based on the entire work of the staff. Now staff assessment system is based on 'target achievement', particularly for the field staff. Each staff has a daily action plan and they are assessed against that. A new assessment format was developed and introduced in 1997. The assessment sheets of all area level staff are marked by their local supervisor and tabulated at HO. Every three months an assessment sheet goes to each staff. In cases of promotion, assessment reports are analysed and then forwarded to the President.

Salary and benefits: The financial plan of the organisation includes various kinds of staff benefits. The staff benefit and welfare includes provident fund, gratuity, special health fund, general health fund, housing loan fund, credit union fund and a special facility fund which comprises insurance and pension. Proshika staffs have a variety of benefits which are not present in many private development organisations in the country.

Financial management

Director (Finance), presently designated as Vice President, holds the responsibility of financial management in Proshika. In the early days of Proshika programmes were more focused on social mobilisation activities. At that time, there were not many trained accountants at the ADC level. As programmes and projects increased, the organisation started employing professional accountants. Also some of the qualified staff who were keeping accounts at the field level became full-time staff. Earlier all bills and vouchers were centrally preserved and maintained. Now only the statements of receipt and payment account come to the central office. From 1994 more female accountants were hired. Now 70% of the accountants are women. According to one senior Proshika manager, the women accountants "are now more active and also performing well."

During phase IV (1989-94) the organisation started its internal audit system. There are about 20 internal auditors. Every 2/3 months one ADC is internally audited. There is also a panel of six external auditors (national). They conduct fund-wise annual auditing. There is a half yearly audit of every ADC. Annually the team can cover over 30 ADCs.

Accounts of the loan programme have been separated for the purpose of easier monitoring. Donors have provided technical assistance for monitoring of loan categories and their computerisation. The monitoring system has been developed upto the ADC level. System computerization has been completed at the central office. The ADC level computerisation is planned to be completed by 1999.

New group savings system: The Group Savings Scheme was started in 1997. Earlier the group members used to keep their savings with themselves. They used to give a 25 per cent collateral, either in cash or in kind, for taking loans from Proshika. In many cases it was observed that the group was falling apart or becoming dysfunctional or they were using up their savings. Now the members keep their savings in a Proshika account. The account is opened by Proshika in a local bank. The groups are given a 5 per cent cash interest on savings and a benefit package as and when needed. The package includes compensating the family in case of death of a member or if members get affected by cyclone, tornado, floods, river erosion and other natural calamities.

Measuring organisational performance

Programme achievements against target are internally measured by the programme management annually. For the credit programme, statistics of target versus achievements are collated on a monthly basis. Some are done on a quarterly basis. At the end of the year the quarterly reports forwarded to HO by the ADCs are compiled to produce an annual progress report.

There is also evaluation done by both donor and government. Prior to every phase of activities there is an appraisal and a mid term review done by the donors. There are also six monthly achievement reports sent to donors.

Impact Assessment studies have also been introduced by the organisation. These studies are usually done by outside consultants, both national and international. The last impact assessment study of Proshika was done in 1995.

The organisation also regularly monitors each programme component. There are usually three types of monitoring. One is done by line management. The other is done by the support departments of the respective programmes, and a third is done by the Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Cell (IMEC). The Research, Evaluation and Monitoring (REM) cell which was formed in 1989 was renamed as IMEC in 1994.

IMEC monitors programmes in all ADCs using a sampling method. In 1997 this type of sample monitoring was done which involved 2200 primary groups. Later the number increased to 3100 groups. The monitoring findings are shared in the quarterly coordination meetings attended by all ADC coordinators. The IMEC also does sectoral evaluation which is actually an internal evaluation of different programmes. This is done when a request from a programme is received. The cell also undertakes feasibility study for programme expansion.

Towards a sustainable organisation

Proshika has been looking into the sustainability of the organisation since the early 1990s. There were various streams of thoughts running through the organisation on this issue. One was sustainability of the organisation from a financial perspective which is two-dimensional. First, Proshika has embarked upon various commercial ventures with the purpose of generating its own income. Secondly, the organisation has adopted policies and strategies to attain self-sustainable programmes through cost recovery measures.

The cost recovery component is critically looked upon by Proshika. Proshika has now a 100 per cent sustainable credit programme. In fact, it is generating a 7 per cent surplus. The organisation is expecting to generate another 30 per cent surplus and with it intends to cross-finance some of its social development programmes during its next phase (1999-2004). However, it is difficult to recover all costs from the social programmes like education and health. The organisation feels that cost recovery from social programmes can be achieved in an incremental way. Until such time these programmes would require donor support.

None of the services provided by Proshika are free of cost. For instance, the training cell provides consultative services to other organisations and earns an income. Proshika charges the school children and learners of the adult literacy centres a certain percentage of the cost, although minimal which aims at recovering some of the material cost. The

organisation also earns from the livestock insurance fund which is usually never fully exhausted. Proshika also renders internet services which not only provides services to its own programmes but offers its services to other smaller NGOs and earns an income.

Apart from its service delivery functions with a cost recovery mode, Proshika also undertakes income earning projects or ventures which would provide market support to group members. There has been a departure from the usual business ventures that Proshika used to undertake in the early 1990s. At one point of time, Proshika was involved in transportation business. It ran profitably for five years. Then it was discontinued as the organisation was faced with certain contradictions. as it called for making compromises with certain values and ethics which the organisation was not ready to bear with.

After re-assessing its ventures in the light of its own experience, the organisation decided to go into those business which provide services to its group members only. For example, hatchery and seed production. The organisation is also exploring the possibility of exporting data processing which will enable job creation. It aims at selecting those businesses which support either some of the group enterprises or production processes or link the members to the market.

IV. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Proshika since its inception has been working with all actors involved in development, namely the government, the donors and other NGOs. This required building and maintaining linkages at the local, national and international level. The net results of relationship building endeavours can be summed up as follows :

Proshika's external relations have been beneficial which has led to the scaling-up of the organisation. Developed over the years through careful analysis and assessment, its relationship with donors, international development organisations and professional bodies have earned valuable resources and appreciations. At the home level, Proshika has developed networks with local-level NGOs and members of the civil society. Proshika's existing relationship with the government and national policy makers has perhaps reached an all time high which, if used constructively, can broaden and strengthen NGOs' role in the country.

Relation with government

There was a time when government looked upon the NGOs with suspicion. As one senior Proshika manager recounts:

1970s was considered a period when NGOs were low key and government looked at them with suspicion. They used to say that NGOs are not transparent. Some used to say we convert people and others called us socialist conspirators. Actually there was no practical cooperation between the NGOs and the government.

The government was not looking too favourably towards the NGOs, Proshika however, started collaborating with the government in the area of training, though on a very small scale. From the very beginning of the organisation, Proshika used government trainers, especially for livestock vaccination and fisheries. The government specialists trained Proshika staff who in turn gave the training to the group members. Later this organisation started developing its own trainers. Since the 1990s Proshika stopped using government trainers altogether.

In 1980 Proshika started to collaborate with the government on specific projects only. The irrigation project where the landless members were to acquire irrigation equipment and sell water to the landowners was financed by a bank with cooperation of the government. This was the first such project undertaken by Proshika with the government. However the 1980s was also a period not devoid of problems. There are instances also where Proshika had conflicts with the government, particularly over giving *khas* land, *khas* pond, natural forestry land over to the poor. This led to a lot of bargaining interactions with the

government. The overall strategy of the organisation was one of simply avoiding the government where it was contemplated that the government will not or did not support them.

The first real cooperation began during the 1987 and 1988 floods. There was in general a feeling that since NGOs were less bureaucratic, work will quickly get done if NGOs were involved in the emergency relief and rehabilitation work. There was also donor preference for NGO involvement. This was considered the entry point of GO-NGO actually working together and gave government an insight that NGOs were working for the people.

After the rapport building, several projects were undertaken by Proshika with government collaboration. 1987/88 also saw the beginning of the livestock vaccination programme. In 1988 Proshika group members were doing Strip Plantation in collaboration with government. Later in 1989 block and forest land plantation was also undertaken. In 1990 this collaboration was further strengthened through a joint venture of Thana Plantation and Nursery Development Project. In 1991 there was the fisheries programme and in 1991 the social forestry and then the Smallholders Livestock Development Programme (SLDP) with government and IFAD. Finally the years 1997 and 1998 saw the Green Belt project and the Forestry Sector project as joint collaboration with government. Basically it is the 1990s which can be characterized as the period where more joint initiatives were taken up.

The Proshika-government relationship has undergone a lot of strain and stress and has finally reached a more positive platform. This process has helped both Proshika and government to understand each other better and has paved the way towards building a more sound partnership. Proshika is now members of several fora formed by the government. Proshika along with other NGOs played an instrumental role in the setting up of the NGO Bureau and establishing the Government NGO Coordination Committee (GNCC). GNCC aims at improving government NGO collaboration.

Relation with donors

Unlike the tumultuous relationship between Proshika and government, the Proshika-donor relationship has been quite smooth. Initially CUSO provided all financial support. The first funding came from CIDA for a period of two years which was Canadian dollars 275,000. The funding for the next two years was .5 million and the subsequent three years was 3 million Canadian dollars. CIDA continued to be the only donor till 1988 i.e. phase III of

Proshika. In phase IV (1989-94) which was the first of five year planning, there were more project activities and the budget was for US\$ 46 million. There were four donors, namely CIDA, SIDA (Swedish), NOVIB, and EZE (German).

Later in Phase V (1994-99), ODA and EU became donors, and a consortium was formed with a group of six donors comprising EU, ODA, SIDA, CIDA, Novib, EZE. However CIDA continued to be the major donor. Until now the organisation did not lose the support of any single donor. The donors have provided ample space and adequate freedom for the organisation to work. Proshika also has five to seven bilateral donors like IFAD, HKI, WFA, SLDP. According to the Proshika leader,

"The donors don't decide or have any influence over the selection of our projects. This has resulted in an enabling environment and a strong partnership." The donor-Proshika relationship sound international linkages have not only been conducive, it has contributed to development of innovative programmes for Proshika. One researcher from the University of Bath, UK, helped developing the concept of "landless irrigation" programme.

Linkages

Local level: Proshika not only interacts with the government and other NGOs, but also with the local civil societies or other local groups. Local level institutions include Bazar, mosque and school committees, where the Proshika group members are involved. As a result of voter education initiative, a lot of Proshika group members have motivated the poor to context for membership of the local body institutions, namely Union Parishad election in December 1997. Several Proshika groups members have also been elected as Union Parishad members.

National level: At this level the organisation maintains linkages with other NGOs both directly and through Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) and CUP (Coordination of the Urban Poor). There is also involvement with women's movements and other civil society groups. There are linkages with concerned ministries and other government organisations including PKSf.

International level: The organisation is partners of Global Civil Society, CIVICUS, NGO working group on World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB), Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative (SAPRI) and many others. Other linkages include Institute for Development Policy Management (IDPM) at the University of Manchester, University

Research Cooperation International (URCI), based at University of Maryland, USA, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Bath University and others.

Relation with other NGOs

Proshika interacts with many NGOs, both small and large, national and international. With the larger national NGOs, the organisation works more in the area of advocacy at the national level with the government. In terms of programme coverage, Proshika avoids overlapping by not working in areas where other big NGOs are working. Before beginning their activities in an area the organisation takes a stock of all major players in that area. This stocktaking also allows Proshika to give adequate space to small promising NGOs to work. Through ADAB, Proshika also collaborates with other NGOs and sometimes even helps them with resources. Training scholarships are provided to interested local NGOs by Proshika through ADAB to develop their capacities. Proshika also offers training packages to NGOs and organisations like CODEC, Action Aid, etc. Some of these training namely, 'Women in Management' and 'Approach to Sustainable Development' which were offered to other organisations had gone off so well that the organisation has integrated them in their own programmes.

V. MOVING TOWARDS GENDER EQUITY

In a male dominated, patriarchal society like Bangladesh women are constantly fighting to find a voice of their own. Women are confined within the sphere of so called domestic work. In the face of poverty women are doubly oppressed, firstly being a woman and secondly because of being poor. They are victims of different forms of gender oppressions like dowry, polygamy, violence and arbitrary divorce. They are discriminated against both within the family and by the society. In a society where gender inequality is strongly prevalent, it is difficult for men to accept women as equals and allow them entry in their work domain.

In the backdrop of a social scenario like this, Proshika has been working for the past 21 years to provide women with opportunities to find an equal standing with men in both the society and within the family. Proshika places emphasis that women work with men side by side. As the President of Proshika points out:

We hardly had any women working with us initially. In 1976 there were some women, but very few in number. The so called religious 'Mollahs' did not allow them to work. We were mostly working with men. Then we requested our male colleagues to ask their wives and sisters to join. Some joined and asked other women to join. That is how women came to work for Proshika.

Organising poor women into groups, raising their awareness through non formal education and training has been major priority of the organisation. Also, Proshika started providing credit to poor women. The credit was accompanied by training to undertake employment and income generating activities. Women members were encouraged to take up economic activities or projects which were not traditionally considered as women's work. Thus they entered the man's domain as they were introduced to broader opportunities outside their home.

Gradually women started becoming aware of the issues that oppress them and realised that when organised they have a more sound standing. Slowly but steadily more women started getting organised and the number of women's groups started increasing. They have developed their own resistance against various sorts of oppression and injustices and became more involved in both social actions and economic activities.

Women started having their representation in the broader Proshika federations. Of course this was a result of a Proshika policy. Every village coordination has a main committee

comprising five members - one president, one vice-president, a cashier and two secretaries. It is customary to have a female vice-president if the president is male and vice versa and also to have one of the secretaries to be female, in order to have a 50-50 male female representation.

Women's participation in all areas of Proshika's development activities has been on the rise. In 1991 the number of women's group equaled that of the men (50:50 ratio achieved). In 1997 the number has gone up to 60 percent of the total. That does not imply that there would be no male participation. As the President delineates:

I personally feel that no overwhelming emphasis should be given to women. I feel men should also be involved in the process of poverty alleviation. Organising the men also serves as a support for women's empowerment, particularly in cases where fundamentalists are spreading evil rumours.

Proshika had to take a lot of measures and policies. Gender aspects needed special focus, and in response in 1982 the women group members were brought under a 'women's programme'. Proshika started giving more concerted efforts to enhance women's participation both within its management and at the group level. There was a component of women in each programme, which were assessed. But in general the women's issues were mainstreamed across the programmes to avoid dichotomy.

Through these components, special activities and projects were undertaken to increase women's involvement. For example, the sericulture project component as an EIG activity was exclusively taken up for the women's groups to augment their economic self reliance. Similarly under the Relief and Rehabilitation Programme consumption loan was given only to the women's groups who were badly affected by the floods of 1988 and for other calamities since then. Under this programme women were provided interest free loan to be paid back over a period of two years. Proshika also provided literacy to women through its adult literacy centres and provided legal literacy and legal assistance as and when needed. The impact of these policies and interventions, in the estimation of one top level Proshika manager, is quite visible:

Earlier women didn't come out of their homes often. Now they do. They are more conscious, more vocal and less superstitious. Their participation has increased. For instance on the 'literacy day' there was a big gathering of about 5000 people in Arai Hazar. Out of which, it was very encouraging to see that, around 4000 were women. They are also resisting the fundamentalists.

The women's programme, later renamed as the Integrated Multisectoral Women's Development programme, established a Women's coordinating Unit (WCU) in 1994-95.

This unit was formed mainly to look into matters relating to congeniality in the work environment for women and to help management take necessary measures that would facilitate development of women staff in their career.

At the group level the women's participation has been good. However, the organisation was not too satisfied with the mobility of women within management. The reason behind this was that the women who were earlier recruited by the organisation did not have adequate qualification. They couldn't be put into higher positions without acquiring certain competencies, while developing competencies meant more time. In response to this the organisation took a programme to 'fast track' this process. In 1992 women were taken from outside with the required academic qualification and they underwent an eighteen month long training followed by work at the field level for 9 months. They were also given a package of computer training and specialized management training. The learning from this programme has been that even if people are taken from the outside they have to be given a sufficiently long gestation period for them to become acclimatized.

Later, another similar six-month long course was offered for a slightly higher level of management. For this course only women with the experience of working in other NGOs could apply and were recruited as Central Coordinator. The organisation is planning another such course for the Programme Coordinators. The President relates his perception about the present environment in the organisation.

Initially there was a bit of apprehension amongst the male staff and an attitude of non acceptance. But we don't see this working in them any more. On the other hand they have become very appreciative. Men are now ready to accept it that management is not by gender but management is by expertise and ability.

In 1995 a monitoring and advisory core team was formed, called the Gender, Resource and Coordination Cell (GRCC). The Cell aimed at reducing gender discrimination both within the organisation and in the society. Presently, 27 per cent of the total staff are female out of which 16 per cent are at the mid management level (Area Coordinator/Training Coordinator).

In 1996 a gender policy was formulated by this cell which included a code of conduct for the staff. The cell is also in the process of developing a code of conduct for the group members also. All policy recommendations have been accepted by the organisation and are in place. The cell also helps the organisation to deal with wider civil society on gender issues.

VI. LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESSION

One can not but discuss the management style of an organisation without its leadership or vice versa. The institutional development of an NGO in Bangladesh is closely linked to continuation of leadership. Proshika as an organisation is fortunate to have a sustained and visionary leadership since its inception. A small team of people, fully committed to a cause and shared vision' helped the founder leader to build a new organisation out of the shock of splitting up of their parent organisation.

The founding leader has all through been motivating his old associates and new entrants who joined the organisation in later years. In fact, the founding leader has all through been keen on developing a team of committed and competent people around him who would provide creative leadership in managing Proshika. This is reflected in his following statement :

What is most important is quality of leadership. But of course continuation is also needed. The first quality of leadership is that the leader must have vision. Without vision the challenges of poverty alleviation or poverty redemption cannot be faced. While working in Proshika, the first thing that we did was to develop coherent development thinking and very clear strategies. Conceptually we have emphasized on vision and strategies. We tried to build a team around it - those who will own the concept and move forward with it.

It is apparent that the management style of the leader of the organization have had a trickle down effect. It has contributed in the evolution of a management style that is regarded as the general style of the organisation which has been termed as "participatory". Under the guidance of able leadership Proshika has been able to grow as an organisation and make an impact in the lives of the poor people. The leaders faith in collective effort, democracy and people's participation have reflections in the subsequent management layers. The leader has made deliberate attempts at allowing all people including group members and staff to participate and take ownership of decisions.

If ownership can be developed, it will have positive sides to it - one is that if things go right everybody feels happy about it and if things go wrong they feel they have collectively made a mistake. Therefore, no one person is responsible, and the organisational unity and coherence is maintained. In an organisation like us we have that ownership and loyalty. Loyalty should not be around a person, it should be around an issue, a mission.

Although it could be said that 'every individual is different and their leadership style will also be different. No one person can replace another'. But to avoid situations where the

organisation will fall flat on its face if any one person leaves, the organisation has taken into consideration a plan of displacement. This is basically a plan of succession in order for programmes and activities to go on, develop, improve and to maintain continuity. Proshika as an organisation is addressing the issue of displacement by trying to practice the theory that 'every one person should be replaceable by two' and accordingly contemplating to place two persons for every position in the organisation. Also a system within the organisation is growing whereby efforts are made whereby new leadership is being consciously groomed through additional training and exposure. They are also deliberately put into problem situations to see how they tackle them. More responsibility is given to staff with potential.

Absence of the leader does not entail any difficulty. This has been evidenced by the fact that the leader had gone on a sabbatical leave during 1987/88 for post graduate study. It was a deliberate attempt on the part of the leader to give others an opportunity to be in the driving seat and run the organisation.

The organisation was finishing one phase and preparing to enter into the next. I was away at a very crucial time and I had planned it in a calculated way. So that people have a chance to develop themselves and experience the issues involved. This meant not only doing their own work but also dealing with the external environment, donor funding, evaluation, government relations... I think that experiment worked well.

The leader's personal style and interest has influenced the organisation to some extent. The leader of the organisation is very much an environmentalist and his personal interest is in the area of environmental science. This is evident from Proshika's focus on environmental programmes. It is treated more as a cross cutting issue within the organisation. The environmental concerns are omnipresent in Proshika since the inception of the organisation. What is now 'ecological agriculture' was earlier called 'organic agriculture'. The organisation has had no deviation or shift from its environmental focus.

The leader's interest in and concern over gender issues and his learning mode also had programmatic implications. His informal personality is also reflected in the informality in workplace. As one mid level manager observes : *"Our leader is a person who is willing to listen and willing to learn from others. He is very informal and can make others feel comfortable and at ease."*

Although all managers are under the umbrella of a common leadership, different programmes have an identity of their own. Their situations are different and so is their work

pattern. Every manager is an individual identity. This has a reflection in their management style which is different from one another. However, since a manager believes in the organisational values and ethos and is within the organisational culture, his or her individual identity is also influenced. One's management style, therefore, can not be very different than that of the overall organisational management style.

The influence of the powerful and enlightened founder leader is felt everywhere within the organisation. There are obvious reasons for that. But what about leadership succession? The ordinary employees do not seem to be concerned much about the transition. The general feeling is : "Faruque Bhai is fully active. He has been effectively guiding our work. We should work hard to achieve the goal of our organisation. We should give more time and thought to our own work now." But to the people at the directorial level the issue is very much a real one. The essence of our discussions with several persons at the top presents a feeling that Proshika is nurturing senior staffs to handle responsibilities for leadership, and transition will be smooth. According to one Director :

"..... If there is a change in leadership, the activities will continue and the core organisational values will remain the same. But there will be a change in management style which will be the new leader's own style."

VII. THE CHALLENGE OF EXPANSION AND GROWTH

From the very outset Proshika took the task of programme development as a challenge, and subsequently expansion as a challenge. The challenge of expansion is inherent in growth. The underlying assumption of the organisation was that there should be organic growth - not growth for growth's sake only. The President of the organisation clearly justifies about the need of scaling up:

We should not be afraid of growing. The problem that we are attacking is so big that if the response is not big enough then we won't be able to make an impact. A small island of prosperity or an island where you have solved a problem may have some relevancy for the academics, but in reality where, say more than 50 million people are poor, if you can't work in 10-20 thousand villages, then the impact of that work on poverty will not be much.

Over the past two decades Proshika as an organisation has grown both in terms of programme contents and staff strength. Between 1986 and 1997 the staff strength increased by eleven times, -- a significant rise. There has been seven-fold increase in the number of primary groups (Table 3). Growth itself has provided the organization an opportunity as well as a challenge. Attaining programme quality as well as managing an increasing number of staff to work towards a shared vision with commitment has become a concern of the management.

Table 3: Growth of primary groups and staff (over 20 years)

Year	Staff Strength		Area Dev. Centre	Primary Group		
	Total	Women (% of total)		Total	Women (% of total)	
1977/78	11	-	16	960	NA	
1978/79	146	-	18	1987	NA	
1980	71	8.45	26	3953	141	3.57
1981	NA	NA	27	4031	631	15.65
1982	NA	NA	30	5707	867	15.19
1983	141	9	33	7713	2046	26.53
1985	291	16.5	NA	NA	NA	
1986	382	19.5	NA	10,768	(51%)	-
1987	458	19	36	13,209	5556	42.06
1988	518	19	36	16,440	(46%)	-
1989-90	606	16	44	21,322	10,543	49.45
1990-91	694	15	49	23,936	12,069	50.42
1991-92	809	18	50	25,822	13,141	50.89
1992-93	1047	19	53	29,573	15,253	51.58
1993-94	1206	18	67	38,720	20,494	52.93
1994-95	1420	18	78	44,198	23,724	53.68
1995-96	1625	20	104	52,333	28,843	55.11
1996-June '97	2225	27	115	68,575	38,789	56.56
1997 up to Dec.	2988	26	121	74,301*	42,308	56.94
1998 up to Jan'	3319	28	121	NA	NA	

* Total member of primary groups was 1,409,774

Proshika is presently implementing its fifth 5 Year Plan. This phase (1994-99) may be termed as a period of rapid expansion. The programme activities have doubled and in some cases tripled, and credit has quadrupled in amount than the earlier 5 Year Plan period.

Proshika's mission statement stipulates that this organisation will strive for growth and expansion. Proshika perceived it well that rapid expansion would put a lot of strain on its management. This organisation thus evolved several strategies and implemented the strategies effectively to combat the challenges. Some elaborations are given here.

Participatory planning and development management

Participatory planning and decentralised mode of operation are two key strategies which this organisation has been pursuing from the beginning. Proshika programmes are planned from below, and the programme participants, i.e., people at the grassroots level, are intimately involved in making their plan. The field staffs and managers at all layers of the organisation are also closely linked with the planning process. The system helps making the plan more sound and realistic.

The organisational strategies are based on 'how to improve the programme', while the programme follows the mission which is a reflection of the needs and wants of the group members and the staff. Through PRA, an attempt was made to find out 'what the groups are doing', 'what they can do in future' and 'how they want to see Proshika in the future'. This provided an opportunity to look at Proshika as a whole and look at Proshika programmes from the perspective of the group members. This exercise enabled primary groups and federation members to prioritise their needs and identify areas where they want to expand. The same exercise was done with the field based Proshika staff and with HO based senior management to ensure their participation too. A HO research team compiled and finetuned all information and data. The plans are assessed in terms of core objectives, vision and resource limitations. Budgetary implications are considered before finalising the plan.

Participatory development has brought in its trail some role of the programme participants in management though it is not significant. The group leaders and village coordination committees are entrusted with certain tasks. The motivated leaders of people's organisations at the village and union level also help in group formation and motivating the

poor to join Proshika programmes. People's role in these aspects helps in reducing the programme operation costs to some extent.

The participatory mode of work allows both the group members and the staff to participate in the decision making process. This in turn kindles a sense of ownership which is shared by all. Achievements are perceived as a group reward. This also helps strengthen the sense of fellow feeling and the feeling of belonging to the same family.

The organisation believes in participatory development management. The core value of this is to ensure participation of all staff at different management layers in the decision making process. In Proshika decision making extends to group members also and they make their plans and strategies. When Proshika was small, it was easier to be participatory. But when an organisation has more than 3300 people working, being participatory is difficult. Certain measures have been adopted to overcome this problem.

Participation implies free and frequent interactions among the people involved in a task. Several fora have been created for both formal and informal interaction to take place to maintain the flavour of participatory planning and management. For example, every three month all management personnel at HO and field offices (around 200) join together to review the performance of the organisation. This number is on the rise, and participatory discussions in such big numbers have posed difficulties. The organisation is currently thinking of having such discussions with a more manageable number and at the same time keeping the essence of participation intact. This seems to be an important challenge that the organisation is facing. There is also a six monthly review, annual review and annual planning conference. Through these fora several policy initiatives have been taken and policy changes made.

Participatory planning is considered by the organisation very important from the perspective of scaling up. It aims at building up an ownership towards vision within the organisation. The process involves both the group members and staff at different level. Planning is not only restricted to the senior or mid management only, it is done by the entry level staff in the field offices. For the first time the organisation is now using PRA methods for planning.

Decentralised Mode of Operation

Proshika of today is a large organisation with around 3,400 full time staff and a dozen of programmes which have spread all over the country. Some of its programmes are

experiencing rapid expansion. For example, Proshika is presently implementing its fifth 5 Year Plan which coincides with its fifth phase of programme operations. This phase beginning 1994-99 has seen rapid expansion. The programme activities have doubled and in some cases tripled and credit has quadrupled in amount than in the earlier 5 Year Plan period.

A big organisation is likely to have ill effects of bureaucracy. Proshika has tried to keep the bureaucracy at bay by adopting two specific measures : decentralisation in operations and a people intensive approach in work. As its President sees:

We don't believe that if you grow, bureaucratisation will come in and quality will suffer. We think that with growth if you can ensure team work, unity of vision and decentralisation in operations then growth will not be such a problem. But if growth takes place without decentralisation and without unity of vision across the whole organisation then it can be rather problematic.

In the light of this Proshika made several efforts to get the process of decentralisation rolling. The HO or the central office has started taking the role of a 'Think Tank', and the Area Development Centres are becoming more autonomous in operating the programmes. The Area Coordinators are expected to take 90-95% of the decisions by themselves and be able to manage their own problems not expecting the centre to manage their problems. This process seems to have paved the way towards more autonomous self development. The organisation is trying to work and evolve in this mode in order to tackle growth in a more systematic fashion.

Volunteerism, Commitment and Professionalism

The ethos of the organisation is based and concretised upon voluntarism. The essence of volunteerism has been passed on from the small founding team of Proshika to the other teams of animators who subsequently joined Proshika. However the working environment has also undergone a gradual change and has moved towards more professionalism.

New projects and initiatives now call for increased input from specialized people. Hence the organisational strategy has been to recruit more specialized and technical people like agriculturist, agronomist, technicians, pisciculturists etc. This, in one hand, has increased the organisational efficiency while on the other hand placed before management a challenge to imbibe in these professionals the commitment towards poverty alleviation, to

internalize the vision, mission and organisational dynamism and to totally involve them in a new culture from within a very dominant culture.

Proshika as an organisation has been proficient in identifying this challenge of professionalism vs. voluntarism and has taken various measures to address this important issue. Efforts have been taken to attempt at blending professionalism, ideology, commitment through formal training and also by addressing these issues informally.

In the face of changing times, the organisation has continued to place emphasis on the commitment of all people/staff working for the poor. Policies and strategies were changed in response to the programme needs, but the management took on board different unwritten and informal strategies to hold on to some of their valued organisational spirits, the spirit of volunteerism. For instance, in the early years of the organisation there were only 'volunteers' taken in for the projects. Then it was the 'animators' who were appointed. They were usually either members of youth clubs or charity associations or had been involved in some form of voluntary work in their communities.

Motivation of works

The Proshika workers are by and large motivated who seem to work with job satisfactions. As one mid level manager feels: *"What I like most about this organisation is its open culture. There exists a close relationship between people here. Everything including work is self propelled and self driven."*

The organisation recognises both material and the non-material needs of human beings. People generally want to feel that they are doing something which is good for them as well as useful for the society. The organisation tries to imbibe in them a feeling that the job is providing them with the opportunity to enable them to realise some of their inner dreams.

It is apparent that the people working for the organisation, especially the more experienced staff who have been longer in the system, felt that they were not only working for their own livelihood, but their work is also providing them with an opportunity to socially contribute. *"The work itself is motivation for them,"* says one mid level manager.

The organisation has also ensured some social securities and benefits in addition to the salary of a staff. The organisation has a staff welfare fund which includes provident fund, general health fund, special health fund, gratuity, housing loan fund, credit union fund,

special facility fund. The special facility fund consists of insurance and pension. In case of untimely death of a staff due to accident or for other reasons, the family receives a pension for 15 years from the time of expiry. If a staff becomes disabled after 10 years of service, s/he is also entitled to pension. The group members are also provided with insurance money in case of unnatural deaths and also to meet the hazards of tornado, floods, cyclones etc. This was started in 1997.

Special Health fund covers all hospitalization costs, both within the country as well for overseas treatment of each staff. Staff members make a minimal contribution in this fund and Proshika provides a matching fund in this account. The staff and his/her immediate family can avail of the fund benefits. The General Health fund pays for all prescriptions and doctor's fee for any general disease of any staff throughout the year. The entitlement is the same as that of the Special Health fund.

The Credit Union fund is like a savings fund. Each staff keeps a designated amount each month as monthly savings. They can take a loan from this fund which may be at least 10 times their savings amount. The Provident fund and Gratuity was introduced since the inception of the organisation while all other staff benefits and incentives were added on from 1989.

Policy advocacy : Another approach that has been added on and which has provided the organisation with a new dimension is in the area of Policy Advocacy. Proshika has been advocating for the poor since early 1980s. Liasioning with local authority has been in the areas of Food for Work project, over leasing of khas ponds and land, forest preservation and others. In the early years of Proshika these interactions often culminated in tension and conflict and took forms of movement and 'Gherao'.

Advocacy has been done both at the local level and at the national policy making level. At the policy level there were some issues where Proshika played a pioneering role in advocacy, for instance 'preservation of forest land by the poor'. There are other issues where other NGOs were advocating also. For example, plantation of roadside and coastal embankments, fisheries and Livestock. In such areas there has been agreements made between government and NGOs. The acting head of Proshika's Training Division observes how this activity helped the organisation:

With regard to policy advocacy, we are working and liasioning at the government level for policy intervention. Through advocacy we aim at building status, acceptance and recognition for NGOs.

Proshika has institutionalized its policy advocacy experience and efforts in July 1994 in the form of an 'Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy'. The institute is engaged in several policy research, education and campaign activities. Besides continuing advocacy campaigns on promoting Ecological Agriculture, a Pro-poor National Budget, Urban-Poor Settlement and on other issues concerning, forestry, fisheries etc. the institute is also organising more systematic campaigns. Policy Advocacy is being used as a tool to attain the broader objective of the organisation.

Future Challenges : Views of the President

Views of the President of Proshika on some 'future challenges' were recorded during the interview. These are summarised here. Excerpts:

In its forward looking vision, Proshika considers itself as an example to the NGO sector rather than seeing Proshika in isolation. In the near future Proshika contemplates to play a major role along with other NGOs in replicating some of the innovations that have already taken place in credit, in education, in management and in democratization.

To build democracy and to derive benefits from democracy is difficult, particularly when democracy has a basic link to development and poverty alleviation. Our society is becoming increasingly democratic. Therefore, the more democracy will be promoted, the more the working space of NGOs will increase. To utilize this effectively will be the challenge. But this will not be a difficult challenge, as Proshika views itself together with other NGOs already playing a role towards democratization of the society.

Another concern that may negatively affect NGOs is the matter of external resources. In the wake of the recent global scenario, there is a possibility that development resources will start decreasing. Therefore in the face of this there should be allocations for the NGOs from governmental budgetary resources. The NGOs will have to untidily work towards this as development implies transfer of net resources from state or from richer communities to the poor. Strategies will need to be evolved to make effective transfer of resources, be it financial resource, or any other resource. NGOs have a role to play with regard to 'net resource transfer', not only from international community but from the government, from richer communities also.

NGOs have an enormous role to play in the building of a secular state. Fundamentalism is no longer a threat as it was in the early '90s. In fact it has gradually reduced. The present education system in Bangladesh is fragmented. Particular attention needs to be given so that the education system is not inclined towards a particular religion but is more secular and scientific and can meet the challenges of the society. NGOs should therefore, aim at providing quality education and contribute towards a more resourceful human development.

Proshika believes that policy advocacy is necessary to create such situations where Proshika and other NGOs can together play an important role. In this context the President observes that *"in some cases advocacy alone does not work. Sometimes with advocacy you have to build pressure."*

There are certain advocacy work which needs to be taken up as an international agenda through building partnerships and coalition with other international actors. South Asian Partnership (SAP) is an example to that. It depends on the issue in hand. For example, in case of good governance in the Bangladesh society, partnership has to be built between NGOs and the civil society.

VIII. SOME LEARNINGS AND CONCERNS

Proshika “has evolved from a small-scale, locally-based, rural action research adhococracy into a large organization with formal structures, a complex set of programmes, a dispersed field staff, an urban programme and strong international linkages.”⁹ The case study aimed at identifying key challenges facing Proshika in managing its growth and the strategies used in coping with the challenges. This section attempts to highlight some lessons learnt and concerns on certain issues.

Management : strengths and concerns

The organisation has attained amazing growth over the last ten years. Between 1988 and 1997 there has been over six-fold increase in staff strength and nearly five-fold increase in the number of its primary groups (Table 1). Annual operational budget of Proshika has gone up by over 40 times by this time (Table 2). Among other things, an effective management system has been a major factor contributing to this growth.

Proshika’s management system and management culture has a lot of strength to sustain its growth. Growth has led to greater formalisation of structures, systems and relationships. The system also appears to be weak in certain areas. As the mid term review has found: *the management culture reflects “deference to seniors and agreement with their analyses, a more top-down approach to training and a tendency to talk of policy as though it is actual practice. However, Proshika’s origins still exert an important influence over its organizational culture and actions. It retains a personalised senior management style, an action-orientation, a genuine concern to help the less advantaged, the use of adhoc teams for problem solving, trust in its employees, a limited interest in post-action measurement and assessment.... a belief that finance will be found, limited accountability for senior staff, high levels of motivation and an emphasis on ‘coordination rather than management’. The intermixing of these various elements is both a source of strength for Proshika ... and a source of weakness...”*¹⁰

Proshika has so far managed its rapid growth well. However, according to its last mid term review, Proshika’s “management structures and systems are showing increasing strain” to

⁹ Mid Term Review: November 1997.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. xi

cope with the growth. Growth had its effect on Proshika's culture which is "changing and adopting features more typical of large organisations in Bangladesh."¹¹ Rapid growth has also made a dent on the senior management which "is overstretched, lacks a coherent structure and often uses 'crisis management' approaches to major issues rather than strategic management." This 'crisis management approach' has produced effective short-term solutions to the problems, but it does not fit well to deal with the increasing scale of Proshika's operations. There are signs that overloads are becoming excessive.¹² The review team comprising several international experts thus came to the conclusion : "Changes are needed in field management, senior management and, perhaps in governance, if Proshika is to effectively continue with its growth strategy."¹³

Proshika's response to the above reviews can be considered : "While Proshika accepts much of what the MTR has said, it has also responded by saying that the organization development process is looked upon by it very much as an internal process for which if required, external facilitation assistance could be sought." Proshika is keen to continue to its institutional development programme in the next phase (1999-2004) and take care of the MTR's observations. 'Crisis management approach' may at times be necessary, particularly when a new project is introduced. But it will ultimately affect the quality of the project output if the approach becomes a part of the system.

With 74,300 primary groups comprising some 1.4 million members, Proshika is managing a big field level activity. Proshika's programme management staff, particularly its managerial staff, can be considered small in size. There are two apparent reasons for which Proshika has kept the staff size small : integrated approach to programme implementation and people-intensive, rather than staff-intensive, approach to its credit operation. All development programmes such as social mobilisation, adult literacy and primary education, health and sanitation, training, credit and savings that support employment and income generation of the group members are implemented through one field office i.e., Area Development Centre (ADC). The ADC Coordinator handles and oversees all operational matters. As a part of its operational strategy, Proshika has transferred a part of the managerial role to the primary groups and the village level federations for collection of regular savings (thrift deposits) and loan instalments from the group members. These two strategies have cut down staff size and operational cost.

¹¹ Ibid., p. XII

¹² Ibid., p. XII

¹³ Ibid., p. XII

With a style and system well established, Proshika's management has been quite stable. Introduction of two new initiatives in recent years, viz., establishment of a policy advocacy institute (IDPAA) and publication of a journal (Discourse) has however, added new responsibilities to the top management. Planning and carrying out pro-poor advocacy and publication of the journal designed to disseminate information to national and international readership have put some strain on the top leadership. The management however, asserts that these are early days, and the initial constraints can be overcome soon.

Leadership and succession

The founder and Executive Director of Proshika, now designated as President, has been providing continued leadership to the organisation since its inception. He is particularly assisted by his two committed associates who are among the founder members of Proshika and who helped building the new Proshika. They are presently holding top management positions as Vice Presidents. The two Vice Presidents have developed their capacity well to run the wide expanse of activities. The leader's willingness to acquire new knowledge, ideas and vision, even through participation in a long course at a university abroad, has contributed to the quality of top management.

Leadership succession issue is of crucial importance for a large and continuously growing organisation like Proshika. The founder leader has provided the leadership to develop a small-scale into a big multifaceted organisation. The second generation leadership needs to be prepared to provide quality leadership in future as the organisation is going into more complex type of programmes and sensitive relationship with the national power structure. A transition process appears to be in place. Senior staffs are being nurtured in various ways to handle responsibilities for future leadership. This is reflected in the recent change made in the management structure wherein the Executive Director has been designated as President, and positions of one Senior Vice-president and one Vice-president have been created. New positions of some directors and deputy directors have also been created.

Participatory planning

The planning systems at Proshika are well-developed. The organisation incorporates group members' input into planning. The five year plan of the organisation, its annual plans, quarterly plans and monthly plans at the ADC level are good tools which have tuned the senior management and the lowest level of operational staff together towards achieving

the targeted objectives. Participatory planning is a distinctive feature of Proshika which demands a good deal of time of the Proshika staff at all level. The participatory approach also involves hundreds of thousands of group members and their time. People from the highest to the lowest level in Proshika feel that this system is useful. However, a question arises : Is it replicable in view of the costs?

Proshika's response to the question is quite specific. The top management feels that participatory planning is an "add-on exercise carried on as a matter of routine", the costs of which "can be amazingly well managed," Time is however, an important factor in order to fully reaping the harvest of participatory planning. The people in top management are already under some time constraints, and they are likely to encounter more strains to cope with the challenges during the upcoming phase (1999-2004) which envisages at least threefold increase of the programme participants, i.e., members of primary groups and related staffs.

International linkages

International linkages and relationship with the government and Bangladeshi NGOs have been quite important for creating an impact of Proshika activities. Relationship with donors has also been another important factor. Proshika could achieve commendable success in all these areas. Donors have not only been liberal in providing with fund but also with useful programme concepts, and support for capacity development. One faculty of the Bath University, UK even helped formulating a project on landless irrigation which was a new event in Bangladesh. Proshika has mobilised a lot of financial and other resources and utilised these well.

Challenges and the coping strategies

In course of its journey Proshika has encountered many a challenge. Some of the critical challenges and the strategies evolved to cope with the crises may provide a useful insight.

The organisation was born through a crisis when the old Proshika divided into two. The initial donors and well-wishers helped in easing out the process. However it was a painful process which has left behind some lessons. The core learning is that there should not be dual leadership or dichotomy in management. There should not also be any ideological

conflict within an organisation. And, an effective mechanism has to be developed and used to operationalise a decentralised system of management.

Proshika faced a financial crisis in the mid eighties when its project approval did not take place in time. As a result, salary could not be given to its staff (around 300 at that time) for more than three months. Surprisingly, not a single staff dropped out or any hue and cry was raised. There was a special spirit among the staff, a spirit of dedication. There was a general feeling that the organisation has been doing something good for the society. It may be useful to note that during the initial period Proshika used to recruit mostly those youths who were social activists or youth club leaders. Recruitment of field staff was done through local offices. Now there are local referral cases but recruitment is done centrally and on the basis of prescribed qualifications.

Proshika has been doing a lot of policy advocacy. The organisation campaigned for a pro-poor policy on forestry land distribution which has resulted in a favourable policy change. This policy change has produced a favourable environment for Proshika staff and its group members to work with the government organisations at the field level.

In the mid-1990s Proshika and many other NGOs in Bangladesh were confronted with the war-cry of the fundamentalists who ransacked assets and properties of several NGOs. It was a terrible situation. Proshika took a leading role in mobilising the NGOs through networking and demonstrating popular support against the fundamentalists. Also, some other initiatives were devised as long-term measures. These strategies proved to be effective.

Growth has provided the organisation with many a challenge. Two specific challenges that have confronted the management are (a) how to meet the challenge of attaining qualitative programmatic outputs and (b) managing and motivating an increasing number of people to work. New projects and initiatives called for increased input from specialised people. The organisational strategy was thus to recruit more of technical people like agronomists, pisciculturists, computer personnel and video experts. This in one hand has increased the organisational expertise and competence while on the other hand placed before management a challenge to imbibe in these professionals the commitment towards poverty alleviation, to internalise the organisations values, and to totally involve them in a new culture. Proshika as an organisation has been able to take various measures to address

the challenge of professionalism vs. volunteerism. Conscious efforts have been made for blending professionalism, ideology and commitment through formal training and informal induction of the new recruits into the organisational culture. Monitoring, impact assessment and formal reviews are tools that have helped improving the quality of programmatic interventions.

Relationship with the government

Proshika's experience of working with the government has been both sour and sweet. Its present relationship with the government is excellent. Proshika at present has perhaps, the best type of relationship with the power structure at the national level. Initially the government was not looking favourably towards the NGOs. Government organisations looked at the NGOs with suspicion. Through patience, careful calculations and collaborative projects Proshika could gradually dispel the air of suspicion and develop ways of partnership development with the government. In the 1980s Proshika had conflicts with the government, particularly over giving *khas* (state) land, *khas* pond, natural forestry land to the poor. The overall strategy of the organisation at that time was one of simply avoiding the government organisations where it was contemplated and where government would not or did not support them. The rapport building began during the 1987 and 1988 floods when NGOs were involved in relief and rehabilitation work. These emergency works helped establishing government's faith in NGOs.

Collaboration with the government went on as Proshika got involved in the implementation of government programmes such as livestock vaccination, strip planation, social forestry, fisheries and forestry sector programmes. There has been a lot of ups and downs in collaboration. In the case of forestry, and *khas* land distribution, the poor and the landless should have more control over the local resources. But the local elite wanted control. So there was a lot of conflict and confrontation. The federations of Proshika's group members held a rally and *gheraoed* the district commissioner's office. Proshika management supported the group members' initiative.

Governance issue

Governance and management are two distinct functions and different types of activities. The nature of relationship between **governance** and **management** of Proshika provide a useful illustration. The **general body** and **governing body** of Proshika are primarily

concerned with governance role. The management is responsible for implementing the policies and programmes formulated and/or approved by these two bodies. The Executive Director, now designated as President, is the CEO of Proshika. The overall responsibility of managing Proshika lies with him. The President is also the chairperson of the Governing Body which is a policy making body. The same person is working as chief of the policy making body and chief of management.

Proshika's general body has remained the same over the past 21 years. No new members have been coopted till date. That means, the same set of people have been running the affairs of the general body since its inception.

Maintaining a reasonable distance between governance and management may be useful for a large NGO like Proshika. The issue does not appear to have been discussed within the organisation so far. In future however, this issue is likely to come up, particularly when the second generation leadership assumes the responsibility.

Tomorrow's challenges

Proshika is preparing itself to enter the twenty-first century with a big five year (1999-2004) plan. The plan envisages massive expansion of its core programmes, targeting a three-fold growth of its primary group membership with commensurate increases in staff strength, budgetary allocations and support services. The organisation aims not only to attain financial self-sufficiency but also to generate a big surplus out of its credit and other programmes. The quantitative growth however, should take care of the quality of programmatic outputs. By any standard, this will be a stupendous task and a big challenge for the management.

Other kinds of changes are also expected to occur in the coming years in the external environment of Proshika. Heightened consciousness of the group members through federation building and their participation in the last local government (Union Parishad) election are likely to raise the hopes and aspirations of the members. Demand for new type and improved quality of services by Proshika's group members is also expected, particularly so when they will be called for 'cost sharing'. Proshika's role is likely to enhance in relation to working with the NGOs and other partners in development during this time.

Future observers can record how Proshika has addressed all these challenges.

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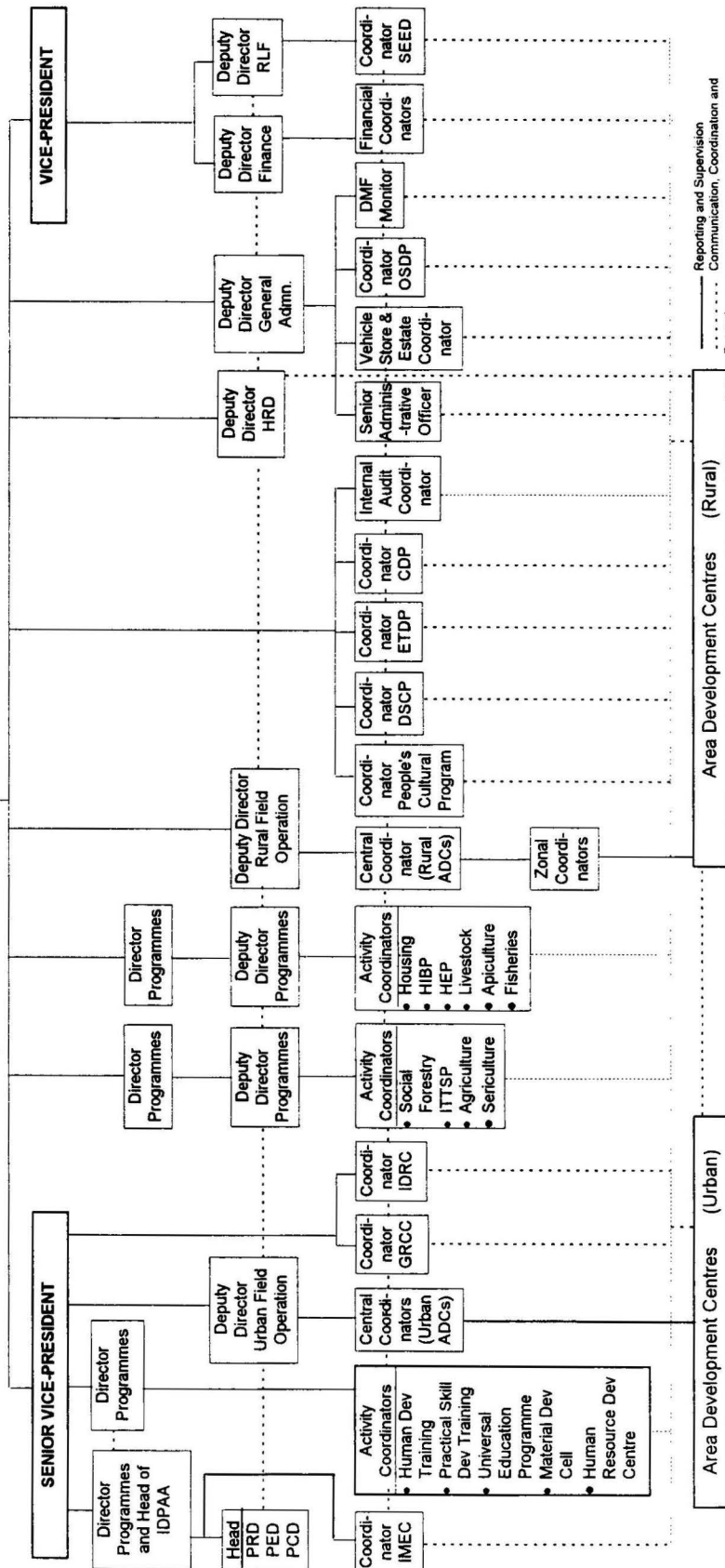
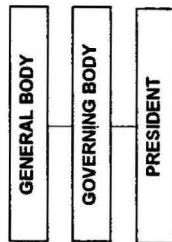
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Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra

Organization Chart

IDPAA = Institute for Dev. Policy Analysis & Advocacy
 PED = Policy Education Department
 PRD = Policy Research Department
 ICD = Integrated Communications Department
 IDRC = Information & Documentation Resource Cell
 IMEC = Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Cell
 UPDP = Urban Poor Development Programme
 MDC = Material Development Cell
 GRCC = Gender Relations Coordination Cell
 HRD = Human Resource Department

DSCP = Dev Support Communication Programme
 DMF = Disaster Management Fund
 CDP = Computer in Development Programme
 RLF = Revolving Loan Fund
 SEED = Small Economic Enterprise Development
 ETDP = Environmental Tech Development Programme
 OSDP = Occupational Skills Dev Programme
 ITTP = Irrigation and Tilling Tech Service Programme
 HIBP = Health Infrastructure Building Programme
 HEP = Health Education Programme



Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra**Governing Body Members**

1. Dr. Qazi Faruque Ahmed
Founding Governing Body Member
President
Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra
Dhaka
2. Mr. M. A. Wadud
Advocate
Dhaka
3. Mr. Abdus Salam Sikder
Ex. Senior Principal Officer
Rupali Bank Ltd.
Dhaka
4. Mrs. Israt Shamim
Professor, Department of Sociology
University of Dhaka
Dhaka
5. Mrs. Aroma Goon
Executive Director
Pact Bangladesh (PRIP)
Dhaka
6. Mrs. Mahera Khatoon
Chief, UNICEF Dhaka Division
Dhaka
7. Mr. Mir Mahabubur Rahman
Deputy Director
Dept. of Physical Education
Jahangir Nagar University
Savar, Dhaka
8. Mr. Mahbubul Karim
Founding Governing Body Member
Senior Vice-President
Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra
Dhaka
9. Mr. David William Biswas
Founding Government Body Member
Vice-President
Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra
Dhaka

List of Persons Interviewed : Proshika MUK

	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Qazi Faruque Ahmed	President
2.	Mr. Mahbubul Karim	Senior Vice-President
3.	Mr. David William Biswas	Vice-President
4.	Mr. Md. Shahabuddin	Director
5.	Mr. Qazi Khaze Alam	Director
6.	Mr. Shah Newaz	Director
7.	Mr. Shahadat Hossain	Principal Programme Coordinator
8.	Dr. Arbab Akand	Principal Programme Coordinator
9.	Mrs. Fauzia Khondaker	Coordinator, GRCC
10.	Mr. Serajul Islam	Principal Programme Coordinator
11.	Ms. Shaheen Jahan	Sr. Administrative Officer
12.	Mr. Md. Solaiman	Credit Analyst
13.	Mr. Shibu Kanti Das	Programme Coordinator
14.	Mr. Golam Kibria Maruf	Zonal Coordinator
15.	Mr. Md. Azizur Rahman	Area Coordinator, ADC Mirzapur
16.	Training Coordinator, Credit and Savings Coordinator and 14 male & 6 female field staff	Patharghata, ADC Mirzapur
17.	Trainers at HRD Centre, Koitta	Trainers - (4) Caretaker - (1)

INITIAL SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE RUPSHA BRIDGE PROJECT IN KHULNA

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