

RALLYING HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISM

ANNUAL
REPORT
2015

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



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Annual Report 2015

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FOREWORD

Bangladesh made notable progress in measures to protect human rights in 2015. The International Crimes Tribunal pronounced 21 verdicts while the Supreme Court's Appellate Division disposed of five cases. Of the latter, three verdicts were implemented in 2015. Again, the Cabinet approved the Formalin Control Act 2015, the Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council Bill 2015; the Bangladesh Public-Private Partnership Act 2015; and the Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy, and Labour Rules 2015.

At the same time, though, the year 2015 was also a year of intense political turmoil that had serious consequences for human rights in Bangladesh. What made 2015 particularly volatile was that it was also the first anniversary of the most recent national elections that had been held, amid considerable controversy, on January 5 of the previous year.

Not surprisingly, the new year dawned with fresh announcements by the main opposition party of its refusal to accept the legitimacy of the latest elections. The mood darkened further when the opposition called on its supporters to bring the country to a halt by blockading all transportation, whether by road, highway or by river. The strong counter actions by the ruling party, its move to confine the leader of the opposition to her office for three months, and its announcement of a ban on all public protest had the inevitable effect of setting off one of the most acrid and violent periods of political unrest in recent history.

The protests in 2015, which were at their most intense in the first quarter of the year, marked a turning point in political expression in Bangladesh in that they were unusually bitter and inordinately brutal. Besides the usual injuries caused to heads, torsos and limbs by sticks, bats and bricks, there was an unusual use of incendiary devices—crude mechanical bombs and liquid (kerosene and petrol) missiles—used to intimidate opponents. Store fronts were smashed, goods looted, public infrastructure pulverized but what was particularly alarming was the frequency with which bombs were used to stop and set buses ablaze, without regard to age, gender, or the political profile of potential victims. At no time in the history of Bangladesh had the country witnessed so much violence and such brutal indifference to civilian life as an accompanying aspect of political “dialogue”.

While hospitals and emergency centres overflowed with the numbers of the injured---the most gruesome among them being burn victims --- normal life came to a standstill. People stayed home for fear of moving in public spaces, school closings during the normal week forced children to remain confined within the walls of their homes. It was possible for teaching institutions to open their doors only on weekend days when, by convention, public demonstrations are held in abeyance. However, even during weekends venturing out to play on the streets proved dangerous for small children, many of who suffered injury from innocently toying with bombs that had been left lying around on streets and near play areas.

Concomitantly, although enforced disappearances declined from the previous year, the number of extrajudicial killings significantly rose in 2015.

No sooner had the political turmoil begun to abate off towards the end of March, than extremist religious groups began to assert themselves. A number of bloggers, known for their liberal, secularist orientations met with their death at the hands of religious fundamentalists. This was followed up with the killing of two foreign nationals, which left the county reeling in incomprehension.

Even as people tried to reconcile themselves with the new force demonstrated by religious extremism, they were called upon to reckon with the growing force of two other unsettling trends: an escalation of violence against women and an intensification of violence against children. Reports of group rapes in India seemed to have given rise to a new taste for sexual violence against women in Bangladesh and a new vogue for particularly brutal forms of non-sexual violence against them. Consequently, 2015 turned out to be one of the most unsettling years for women as news about incident after incident of group rape

committed against women and girls in the most unlikely of places –on trains, in mini vans, on boats, ferries, in amusement parks and university campuses -- began to pour in through the media. ASK's legal aid service staff report that never before in their experience had they been confronted with rape, especially group rape, on the scale it had reached in 2015. Nor had they ever witnessed domestic violence reach the levels of brutality it displayed in the same year.

The change towards a new kind of violence, the shift in attitudes from using violence instrumentally as a means for attaining practical goals to a means for deriving pleasure and self-gratification perse, also had direct consequences for the children of Bangladesh (Section II, (A), EVOLVING PATTERNS IN VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN).

Consequently, the conditions under which ASK staff had to work in 2015 were extremely trying. Scheduled meetings and training programmes could not take place on time. The uncertain conditions on roads and highways made it difficult for ASK staff to visit programme sites in the Districts in order to monitor progress and provide support. Work placed on hold for much of the year had to be completed in a frantic rush towards the end of the year. ASK as an organization remains grateful for the unstinting dedication and efforts of the staff in helping ASK to achieve its mission in 2015.

Md. Nur Khan

Executive Director (Acting)

ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	: Alternative Dispute Resolution	MRRU	: Mediation and Rapid Response Unit
BNAD	: Biddaloy Nattya Dol (School Theatre Team)	NGO	: Non-Governmental Organizations
CBO	: Community Based Organization	PCU	: Publication and Communication
CEDAW	: Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women	PIL	: Public Interest Litigation
CRU	: Child Rights Unit	PNGO	: Partner Non-Governmental Organization
DB	: Detective Branch	PS	: Program Supervisor
EC	: Executive Committee	PSC	: Primary School Certificate
GD	: General Diary	PSCU	: Psycho-Social Counselling Unit
GLAF	: Government Legal Aid Fund	PME	: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
GPA	: Grade Point Average	RAB	: Rapid Action Battalion
GSJ	: Gender and Social Justice Unit	SSC	: Secondary School Certificate
GT	: Guide Teacher	SS&HH	: Support Services and Halfway Home Unit
HR	: Human Rights	TA	: Transaction Analysis
HRAU	: Human Rights Awareness Unit	TOT	: Training of Trainers
HRDF	: Human Rights Defenders' Forum	UMNP	: Union Manabadhiker Nattya Parishad
HRV	: Human Rights Violation	UN	: United Nations
HSC	: Higher Secondary Certificate	UNHCR	: United Nations Human High Commissioner for Refugees
JSC	: Junior School Certificate	UP	: Union Parishad
MIA	: Media and International Advocacy Unit	UNO	: Upazila Nirbahi Officer
MNP	: Manabadhikar Nattya Parishad	UzMNPP	: Upazila Level Manabadhiker Nattya Parishad
MSP	: Manabadhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad	VAW	: Violence Against Women
MNS	: Manabadhikar Nari Samaj	VAC	: Violence Against Children
MAP	: Manabadhikar Ainjibi Parishad		

Fatwa

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

Hilla

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

PNGOs

ASK has a Dhaka-based office. In order to carry out local activities, e.g. advocacy, training, legal aid etc, it selects like-minded Partner Non Government Organizations at the community level. ASK provides technical support, while these organizations are responsible for arranging project activities. ASK also provides training on family law, human rights, women's rights etc to these organizations' staff and group members/leaders. ASK works with PNGO with the desire to see the organizations growing up as a Human Rights Organization.

Salish

An informal, traditional system of mediation used to settle marital and land disputes outside the court. A Salish can mediate civil cases only. Criminal cases, such as rape, VAW are outside its purview.

Salishkar

Mediators who conduct shalish. Generally, local elected representatives, school teachers, NGO workers, religious leaders, etc.

Adibashi

Indigenous people, staggered across the country although being insignificant in numbers in the proportion to the total population of Bangladeshis. Their largest concentration is in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), where thirteen different Adibashi groups constitute a razor-thin majority over the ethnic Bangali Population. In the plains, they are mostly concentrated in the greater Rajshahi, Mymensingh and Sylhet regions. There are significant Adibashis populations in the Gazipur district of Dhaka and in the coastal regions of southern Bangladesh.

ASK AT A GLANCE

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

ASK has no political affiliation and adopts a non-partisan approach in defence of human rights. It is a membership based organization founded by nine individuals (4 women and 5 men, 4 deceased). It currently has 23 general members, 15 women and 8 men. A nine member executive committee, currently comprising 7 women and 2 men, meets regularly to decide on policy matters. The general members meet once every year. ASK has consultative status with UNECOSOC.

Status

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

Strategies

ASK's strategies for the promotion and protection of human rights are carried out by 16 programme units and one "component". Units work closely with each other but carry responsibility for specialized functions such as, to name a few, creating human rights (HR) awareness in the public at large, facilitating the development and strengthening the capabilities of organizations in communities for identifying, investigating and protesting HR violations; monitoring law enforcement and legislative processes in the country; liaising with international HR protection organizations, including the UN HR promotion system, to create transparency about the HR situation in Bangladesh; publishing books and articles that help to shape HR perspectives on new issues and problems; and undertaking public interest litigation in the Supreme Court of Bangladesh to protect the HR of citizen and foreigners to equality under the law.

In addition, ASK directly provides legal and mediation services, including rescue and shelter, in cases involving violation of women's rights and child rights; operates several non-formal education centres for working children and street children in Dhaka. In brief, the activities of ASK are designed with a view to make a comprehensive and sustainable change in the HR situation of Bangladesh and can be classed under the strategies of:

- Awareness raising and strengthening organizational structures in the working areas.
- Capacity building of Human Rights Actors.
- Legal aid and other support services.
- Advocacy and networking.
- Protection of children.
- Institutional development of ASK.

Strategies carried out by different units of ASK and their areas of work are as follows:

STRATEGIES	UNITS
1. Awareness raising and strengthening organizational structures	Human Rights Awareness (HRA) Gender & Social Justice (GSJ)
2. Capacity building of Human Rights Actors	Training (TRU)
3. Legal aid and other support services	Mediation & Rapid Response (MRRU) Litigation Outreach Support Services & Half Way Home (SS&HH) Psycho-social counselling Unit
4. Advocacy and Networking	Investigation (INV) Documentation (DOC) Publication & Communication Legal Advocacy & Policy Reform (LAPRU) Media and International Advocacy (MIA)
5. Protection of Children	Child Rights (CRU)
6. Institutional Development	Administration (ADMIN) Accounts & Finance (ACFIN) Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (PME) Internal Audit (IA)

Partnerships: ASK conducts its programmes outside Dhaka in alliance with 18 key partner NGOs, CBOs, 52 Schools and 19 Human Rights Defenders Forums (HRDF). See ASK Support System in Annex II.

SECTION ONE

ASK'S JOURNEY FROM PROVIDING LEGAL AID TO DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

ASK began as a legal aid service agency in 1986, and in the span of twenty nine years has slowly but assuredly transformed itself into a full-blown human rights organization. The change is remarkable in that many consider legal aid to be the reverse of human rights (HR) approaches. Indeed, Senator Jose Diokno of the Philippines once went so far as to declare that legal aid was no more than "the lawyer's way of giving *alms* to the poor"¹.

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

*....carries within it the seeds of dependence that can prevent those it serves from evolving into self-reliant, inner-directed, creative and responsible persons who think for themselves and act on their own initiative*².

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

A. ASK'S APPROACH TO LEGAL AID

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

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

The majority of the individuals who turn to ASK for legal aid are women living in poverty. The usual run of problems they respond to has more to do with issues arising from personal and domestic disputes such as polygamy, abandonment, and divorce³. Their concerns are dominated by practical issues of being able to secure child custody and child support, maintenance for the wife (if un-divorced) and, in the case of divorce, payment of the dower promised to the wife at the time of marriage. Their most pressing need is for immediate relief, more expediently met through existing laws that provide for food, clothes, healthcare, housing for the women and their children. While changes in law, granting women fair right to child custody, adequate child support, and equal rights to marital property offer the best solution, the process of legal reform can take generations of life times. As such, the need to rely on whatever recourse is available through current legal provisions —regardless of their flaws.

1. Jose Diokno cited in Wilson, Richard J. and Jennifer Rasmussen (ed.), p. 10. *Promoting Justice: A Practical Guide to Strategic Human Rights Lawyering*, Washington, D.C., International Human Rights Law Group, n.d.

2. *Ibid.*

3. The second most important group of complaints has to do with domestic violence. Only a small, but growing, proportion of complaints pertain to employment-related conflicts such as non-payment of wages and mistreatment by employers, and mostly involve women and children working as domestic servants, and women garment workers.

Using Legal Aid to Strengthen Legal Reform and Advocacy

ASK has been able to successfully break through the limitations imposed by legal aid by using the insights it offers into worlds of women, children and the poor to add substance and nuance to its national advocacy efforts for the reform of family laws, laws regulating inheritance, child labour and education. The stand the organization's advocacy takes is valued for its combination of pragmatism and courage. In the short run, it advocates reform in Hindu Personal Law so Hindu women can *at least* enjoy the same *flawed* rights to divorce, maintenance etc. common to Muslim women, while, at the same time, it prepares the ground for more sweeping reforms in some distant but hoped-for future. The latter is through ASK's advocacy efforts for the adoption of international treaties, such as CEDAW, which obligate the government of Bangladesh to ensure gender equality.

Again, the organization opposes child labour but fears that an abrupt ban will result in the channelling of hundreds of girls into the sex trade. Consequently, ASK focuses on establishing the rights of child workers to at least a primary school education, which prepares children for a secondary school education (if they so desire) or quality vocational training. The effort, it turns out, is complicated. The very woman, who visits the legal aid clinic for help with child support from her "unfeeling" ex-husband, thinks nothing about putting her 10 year old daughter to work as a maid. Nor does she wince when she sends out her 12 year old son to earn money from begging in hazardous traffic. ASK runs a series of parenting workshops to convince the divorcee, and others like her, of the benefits of a basic education. Despite evidence to contrary, despite queues of disappointed university graduates returning home from failed job interviews, the workshops are able to strike a chord, and children are able to continue with an education. This is partly due to ASK ability to appreciate why the parents oppose education and what types of arguments are most likely to appeal to them—an ability that grows out of its experiences in providing legal aid.

Using Legal Aid to Empower Users

The process of individual empowerment for ASK begins with how it defines its relations with those who turn to it for aid. Such individuals are not helpless "clients" but active, calculating, even conniving, "users". They are not passive "victims" of violence but resilient "survivors". The *users* and *survivors* are not lesser than ASK and its staff, but fellow travellers on the path to justice --- partners in the creation of a society based on a culture of justice and peace.

ASK is unique in the importance it places on achieving a balance between responding to people's practical needs and providing for their strategic needs for psycho-social healing and recovery of own leadership. Accordingly, in addition to providing a range of practical resources --free legal assistance; shelter, food and medical assistance, and economic skills and legal literacy training, ASK promotes an intensive programme of training in gender relations analysis, concepts for understanding how power is acquired and ceded, and psycho-social counselling, in groups and individually, to users. The stress on the relevance of the non-material requirements in empowerment is a major innovation in Bangladesh, credit for which belongs largely to ASK, which introduced training in counselling into the country in 1997 and began to provide it as a service from 2001.

Because of its complexity, ASK's legal aid service is not the work of a single unit but a comprehensive programme that requires the involvement of five separate units, employing 50 full-time and 2 part-time staff, and 2 interns. In addition, the programme draws heavily on ASK's Training Unit to design and run courses for users.

Components of ASK's Legal Aid Programme

- *The Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU)*. Provides mediation service as well assistance via rescue. Facilitates link-up with ASK's Training Unit and its workshops in gender relations analysis, leadership development, self-empowerment. Also links up with Psycho-Social Counselling Unit services. *MRRU* routinely monitors and follows up on agreements arrived at through mediation or litigation, e.g., agreements about parental rights to visit children, a wife's right to use the phone, visit her on parents and friends etc.
- *The Litigation Unit (LAU)*. Provides legal representation to those open to claiming rights through action in courts. Links up with Training Unit and Psychosocial Counselling when requested.

- *Psycho-Socio Counselling Unit (PSCU)*. Provides individual and group counselling to users of ASK's legal aid. Also provides training and refresher training in counselling techniques to other NGOs and organizations.
- *The Half-Way Home*. Provides comprehensive support to women under threat of violence or needing temporary housing. Besides housing, food and medical treatment, and counselling, the Half-Way Home provides access to all training programmes and workshops available to other users of legal aid. Also, arranges vocational training and small business management training with help of external trainers. Stresses training with strong market potentials.
- *The Outreach Unit* is responsible for assisting other NGOs to replicate ASK's legal aid system outside Dhaka. The Unit provides hands-on technical support to NGOs in managing legal aid clinics, liaising with panels of lawyers who are willing to represent clients living at or near the poverty line. Outreach operates in urban centres of seven districts, i.e., Chittagong, Barisal, Hobigonj, Statkhira, Rajshahi, Tangail and Bogra.

Diversifying Intake through HR Monitoring

From its early days, ASK has relied on monitoring violence and rights violations of a more public nature. Such violations are more readily construed as the denial of *fundamental* rights, which more closely approximate HR and, hence more conducive to seeking justice on HR grounds. This group of transgressions include violence and neglect by the State and its various agencies --arbitrary arrest, torture of prisoners, abduction by security forces, eviction of slums, failure to protect minorities against attacks by mobs, etc. It also includes violations of rights by large institutions, which are theoretically regulated by the State. In Bangladesh, violations common to this category are: medical malpractice (hospital), substandard drug production (pharmaceutical industries), unsafe work environments (the garments and ship-wrecking industries), violation of safety codes (inland river transport), and overcharging for services (educational institutions).

HR Monitoring: A Pivot in ASK's Work Processes Currently, ASK's Documentation Unit scans nine daily newspapers, two weeklies, one monthly, and two bi-monthlies to compile data about incidents of rights violation and acts of violence in the country. The results of the scanning appear in the form of a list that is presented to the Action Meeting with which heads of Units begin their work each day. The meeting selects incidents to be followed up and the division of labour among various units, including legal aid, legal reform, and international advocacy. The Investigation Unit is usually tasked with probing the more complex cases and adds its suggestions for follow-up by other ASK units, including through litigation and Public Interest Litigation.

Over the years, ASK's monitoring work has come to gain a solid reputation for its neutrality and professionalism. It deploys its Investigation Unit to probe more complex cases such as violence against religious and ethnic minorities, disappearances of political and social activists, violence against journalists etc. The investigations are based on gathering physical and oral evidence from all sides to a conflict. In some areas, even members of the bench now require that information presented to courts be validated against findings by ASK.

ASK uses the findings of its monitoring activities to protest HR violations, using both written appeals to the government and legal action to demand accountability from the State. Over the years it has protested and sensitized the public to new threats to HR: human trafficking, abuse of immigrant workers working overseas, the selling of young women into the sex trade, the international trade in human organs and medical practice, among others. The experience has significantly strengthened ASK's capabilities, enabling it to open up new frontiers in the struggle for HR. Today, ASK is known as a pioneer among HR organizations, acknowledged for the clarity of its analysis, and respected for its courage.

- It was first among organizations in Bangladesh to raise the alarm about the spate of extrajudicial killings, which began when the army launched Operation Clean Heart in 2002⁴.

4. The method for eliminating opponents has mutated over the years, from "death from heart failure" under Operation Clean Heart to death "in cross-fire", "gunfire", "encounter" and simple "disappearance".



Mainstream school children, whose parents often employ child domestic workers, learn about child rights

- Again, when as many as 57 elite army officers were killed in a single day during the famous BDR uprising of 25 February 2009, ASK's was the sole voice raised to demand due process for the discontent foot-soldiers (*jawans*, who stood accused of the killings. Arguing that, regardless of how heinous their alleged crime, the *jawans* had inherent rights to a fair hearing from the law, ASK worked around the clock proceeded to offer legal assistance to the accused and to ensure visits from their family.

The role of pioneer is not entirely a thankful one. Ironically, convincing the public about the implications of *new* threats to HR proves much more difficult than persuading them about the unacceptability of old arrangements. When extrajudicial killings first surfaced under the rubric of "Operation Clean Heart", ASK was the first to raise concern but met with dissent and criticism. At public meetings, held to discuss the new trend, even members of the media openly mocked ASK's opposition to extrajudicial killings. According to them, extrajudicial killings helped to eliminate were known criminals and the army had done the country a favour by removing them from society. The heckling was painful. Some members of ASK even went so far as to suggest that invitations to future discussions be designed to screen out potential sceptics. ASK's response was to persevere, bear the humiliation from people with strong law-and-order inclinations, and trust people to distinguish between what serves HR and what denies it.

B. ASK'S PROJECT: CREATING PARTNERS

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

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



Dec, 22, 1015, Children and youth in Bashabo (Dhaka city) march for child safety and education

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

C. THE TASK AHEAD

As articles in the following section show, the fight for human rights in Bangladesh is at a critical crossroads. The sheer escalation of violence in terms of quantity and quality in 2015 took everyone by surprise. The trend presents a daunting challenge to ASK in terms of its capacity for developing concepts, language to refer to new tendencies, and strategies for coping with their implications for HR. As ASK proceeds to take on the challenge it will, hopefully, be able to rely on its past experiences to show the way.

EMERGING THREATS TO HUMAN RIGHTS

SECTION TWO

A. Evolving Patterns in Violence Against Children

B. Recent Trends in Human Trafficking

C. Resurgence in Extrajudicial Killings and enforced disappearances

2015: Incidents of Violence Against Children

Types of Incidents of Violence Against Children	Age			Nil		Yes	Percent
	0-6	7-12	13-18	Info	Total		
SUICIDE							
Suicide after sexual harassment	0	2	15	3	20	11	55%
Suicide after assault by teacher	0	0	1	1	2	1	50%
Subtotal	0	2	16	4	22	12	1.05
MURDER							
Death of domestic worker after rape by member of employer's household	7	7	11	16	41	17	26%
Murdered after physical assault by family member(s)	7	3	2	-	12	5	8%
Murdered after physical assault by non-family member(s)	5	13	8	-	26	13	16%
Murdered after rape	-	8	8	-	16	9	10%
Murdered after abduction	3	9	2	1	15	5	9%
Murdered after sexual harassment	0	-	1	-	1	1	1%
Murdered by extortionists, goons	1	1	1	1	4	2	3%
Missing & found dead	2	4	1	1	8	5	5%
Body recovered (no explanation of circumstances or cause of death)	4	6	5	8	23	9	15%
Mysterious death of child domestic worker	7	5	-	1	2	3	8%
Subtotal	29	58	44	27	158	69	100%
PHYSICAL ASSAULT & CORPOREAL PUNISHMENT							
Physical assault by outsider	12	69	73	15	169	58	34%
Physical assault by household/family member	4	2	1	1	8	3	38%
Corporeal punishment by teacher	0	16	0	85	101	9	9%
Assault on child domestic worker	1	6	3	0	10	2	20%
Subtotal	17	93	77	101	288	72	101%

Types of Incidents of Violence Against Children	Age			Nil	Total	Yes	Percent
	0-6	7-12	13-18	Info			
RAPE							
Rape of girl child	25	84	123	0	232	143	62%
Rape of boy child	2	1	1	0	4	-	0%
Subtotal	27	85	124	0	236	143	0.62
SEXUAL HARASSMENT							
Sexual harassment (eve teasing)	0	4	6	45	55	12	22%
Subtotal	0	4	6	45	55	12	0.22
TRAFFICKING							
Attempted trafficking	0	2	0	2	4	-	0%
Subtotal	0	2	0	2	4	0	0
MISSING OR ABDUCTED							
Abduction	1	5	2	3	11	4	36%
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Subtotal	1	5	2	3	11	4	0.36
EXPLOSIVES (INJURY FROM)							
Injury from explosives. Includes injury from explosives carried by others as well as the child victim	3	4	-	4	11	-	0%
Subtotal	3	4	0	4	11	0	0
TOTAL	77	253	269	186	785*	312	39.75%

ASK: Compiled from the dailies: *Prothom Alo*, *Samakal*, and *Janakantha*. Totals refer to number of incidents, not the number of children affected

A. EVOLVING PATTERNS IN VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

In 2015, according to reports published in 4 national dailies (Ittefaq, Prothom Alo, Shomokal, and Jonokonthho), there was a total of 785 incidents of violence against children in Bangladesh. This bleak depiction of abuse and violence directed at children in Bangladesh is not entirely unexpected. Side by side with images of doting love for children featured in illustrated books of nursery rhymes in middle-class households, there has always been child exploitation and child abuse. Until recently, children have been principally valued for their potentials to contribute to household labour and old age security got parents. Putting children to work in agricultural fields and small home-based manufacturing units made sense because it taught them valuable economic skills needed for their future survival. Child labour was also prized because it helped build moral character ---develop responsibility in children.

It is therefore not surprising that, despite a recent ban on corporeal punishment in schools, it still continues to be practiced in educational institutions, as does the belief that to “spare the rod” is to “spoil the child”. As a consequence, a significant proportion of households still consider praise and positive reinforcement for good behaviour to be counter-productive, suspecting them of lowering the bar and encouraging self-complacency in children.

PATTERNS IN VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

- I. Nevertheless, what *is* surprising about the reported incidents of violence against children (VAC) is the *seriousness* of their impacts, their characterization as acts of self-aggrandizement, brutality and---disturbingly ---*pleasure-seeking*. 60 per cent of incidents of VAC in 2015 were serious acts of criminality and comprised murder, suicide, rape and sexual harassment.

2015: Incidents of Violence Against Children by Type		
Suicide & Murder		180
<i>Suicide</i>	22	
<i>Murder</i>	158	
Assault		288
Sexual Harassment & Rape		291
<i>Sexual Harassment</i>	55	
<i>Rape</i>	236	
Trafficking		4
Missing and Abducted		11
Explosives: Injury from		11
TOTAL		785

- Of the 20 children who took their own life, two were under the age of 12.
 - Of the 158 children who died at the hands of others, 29 (18 per cent) were under six years of age, and 58 under age 12.
 - 235 of incidents of VAC involved child rape. In terms of age, close to half (47 per cent) of the victims were under the age of 12 years; 11 per cent, under the age of 6. Four of the children raped were boys; two of them under six years of age.
 - Rape is closely associated with death. 57 of the children, who were raped, subsequently died either as a result of injuries suffered during rape or because they were deliberately killed to prevent them from giving evidence.
 - Compared to rape, sexual harassment elicits less social concern but, like rape, sexual harassment is closely associated with children taking their own lives. The reason for 20 of the 22 incidents of child suicide was sexual harassment. Two of the children who committed suicide were under age 12.
- II. Before, when households were secluded and more isolated from outside institutions, the family and school teachers can be assumed to have been the major source of VAC. Also, such violence was likely to have been more moderate, e.g., in cases of physical assault, limited to slapping rather than battery; in cases of sexual violence, limited to sexual harassment rather than occur as rape. Evidence from 2015 shows the growing role of external (extra-household) sources in VAC in Bangladesh and a corresponding increase in brutality, insensitivity to the pain of another-----and sense of pleasure derived from inflicting pain.

2015: Vulnerability of Child Domestic Workers to Violence

	AGE (Years)				
	0-6	7-12	13-18	No Info	Total
Physical assault by non-family member:					
Of which, child is a domestic worker	1	6	3	0	10
Not employed as child domestic worker	12	69	73	15	169
Subtotal	13	75	76	15	169
Physical assault by traditional sources of discipline:					
household/family member	4	2	1	1	8
Corporal punishment by teacher	0	16	0	85	101
Subtotal	4	18	1	86	109
TOTAL	17	93	77	101	288



Shahadat Hossain, a 8 years old boy was shot by ruling Parliamentarian in Gaibandha. (Source: bdnews24.com)



Rajon, a thirteen year old boy was beaten, poked, tortured for nearly half an hour, resulting in his death in Sylhet. (Source: Dhaka Tribune)

- Physical assault and beating accounted for 288 (37 per cent) of total incidents of VAC. Of these, a minority of the incidents 109 (38 per cent) were caused by traditional sources, i.e., the family, household and teachers), who are customarily charged with “disciplining” children. Outsiders accounted for 169 incidents of VAC. In addition, employer households accounted for 10 (3 per cent) of VACs in 2015.
- Child workers dependent on strangers and distant relatives for employment are particularly vulnerable to mistreatment. Especially vulnerable are children who work as domestic help behind the walls and closed doors of middle class families. 53 (33 per cent) of the 158 children who were murdered in 2015 were child domestic workers. Of these, 41 were raped by a member of the employer’s household. The cause of death of the remaining 12 is not given. Another 10 child domestic workers were physically assaulted, presumably as a disciplinary measure.
- As the world becomes smaller, abduction, attempted abduction, disappearances, trafficking and political violence have been claiming more and more children over the last decade. In 2015, 15 children were abducted and killed; attempted abduction claimed another 11 children; 8 children went missing and were subsequently found dead; 4 children fell victim to attempted trafficking;
- Eleven children were injured from explosives during the political protests of 2015, which turned violent. The explosives were in the form of crude bombs children found on the streets, and cocktails of burning

kerosene and petrol, which were hurled at passing buses and rickshaws carrying children. Impressionistic evidence suggests that several other children died from explosives.

Quality of Violence

If the statistics on child suicide, murder and rape in Bangladesh are alarming, details about some of the violent incidents in 2015 arouse horror and shock. Such occurrences appear to indicate a descent into cynicism and nihilistic self-gratification that demands serious re-thinking of our social values and national goals by way of education and cultural policy.

This shift in attitudes first began to be noticeable around 2013 when religion-based parties, such as the Jamat-e-Islam, began to recruit children as foot soldiers in their battles against secularist political parties. Children along with women, carrying banners and flags, were deliberately placed in the forefront of marches and demonstrations, to act as human shields against baton-wielding police. In 2015, violence against children in Bangladesh appears to have taken on an equally sinister turn when a series of incidents shocked the country into the realization that violence against children was partly motivated by the desire to protect one's economic interest but had become transformed into an activity that was innately and inherently gratifying in itself, i.e., watching a child suffer and agonize to death had become a spectator sport, a past-time equivalent to the thrill was watching gladiators being mauled to death in ancient Rome.

- On August 3, 2015, in the Tootpara neighbourhood of Khulna town, 13 year old Raquib, a car mechanic, was killed by Sharif, his former employer. The employer was furious because Raquib had quit his job and found employment elsewhere. When the boy happened to visit a store in the old neighbourhood, Sharif and his uncle (Mintu) lured him into the garage and then proceeded to pump air in his rectum. His intestines split and his lungs burst, Rakib died on his way to treatment in Dhaka.
- On August 17, 2015, 16 year old Rajah, in Hazaribagh, Gonoktuli, Dhaka was beaten to death as punishment for having stolen a laptop and mobile phone. His accuser was head of the wing of the ruling political party. The accuser was assisted by his friends and carried out the execution on the open road.
- 50 secondary school students of Bhuiara High School (Kochua, Chandpur) were beaten up by members of the political wing of the ruling political party. The demonstration was to protest an earlier assault, by the same youth group, on one of the teachers of the high school. The teachers error had been his refusal to yield to their demand for a donation.
- On 5 August 2015, Robiul, a student of a madrassah of Amkhola Village of Taltali Upazila, Barguna District, was killed for stealing fish. His accuser calmly plucked out his eyes and let him bleed to death. His body was found floating in the canal.
- As if this were not enough, on July 8, a number of individuals took it upon themselves to chastise 13 year old Rajon for stealing. To drive the lesson home, they tied the boy to a stake in an open market-place and then proceeded to flog him with a rod iron. The boy repeatedly pleaded for mercy but the flogging progressed undeterred, with the audience watching in fascination. For added measure, one of the “disciplinarians” filmed the whole scene on his smart phone for simultaneous broadcasting on his Facebook page.

Finally:

- At Anam Medical College Hospital Savar, a child was flung to his death from the 7th floor by his father. The child's crime was that he had a health condition, which required surgery at a cost that was beyond the father's means.

Public Response

The extreme insensitivity and cruelty associated with the deaths of Rajon and Raquib jolted civil society and social organizations into action. Mass meetings, demonstrations and rallies created a storm of protest. The electronic and print media responded with greater attention to fresh news of child abuse and child torture. Consequently, the headlines of a majority of national newspapers at the time contained the words of either “Child Abuse” or “Child Killing”. University and college students added their weight by publishing their opinions and demands on social media. As a result, the courts handed down death sentences against the killers of Rajon and Rakib within 17 days of the start of hearings of their cases. The prompt action by the courts held out hopes of a positive change in the culture of governance –away from one of impunity to one of accountability and the rule of law.

However, this is only a partial picture of the State's response to child abuse. In reality, there has been very little improvement in the attitudes of the police or courts and the lack of seriousness with which violence against children is treated. There is little willingness to investigate complaints brought to the attention of the police; enthusiasm for bringing perpetrators to book is even lower.

- According to the Bangla daily, Samakal, (10 Nov 2014), a boy named Samiul had been killed in the Adabor neighbourhood of Dhaka on 23 June 2010. Five years have elapsed since then but no progress has been made on the investigation. Rather the accused has been released on bail and is to be seen freely roaming the neighbourhood. There are innumerable other examples of indifference and neglect. The delays only convince the perpetrators that nothing is to be feared by way of punishment.

OBSERVATIONS

- It is clear from reports in the media and events around us that VAC in Bangladesh has intensified in terms of sheer brutality and indifference towards children, and is likely to intensify even further with time. Many of the factors commonly associated with child exploitation and child abuse are only likely to grow in importance as the economy develops; technology advances, trade and travel within the country and beyond increases, and contacts with other countries grow.
- Children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in the workplace. Yet, economic development potentially increases the demand for cheap labour, of which child labour is the cheapest. In response, a plethora of new industries, mostly operating in poorly regulated informal sector-like conditions, is likely to sprout up, beckoning families anxious to place their children in employment. Unless society and the authorities intervene, the new industries will only succeed in replicating the examples set by existing ones in recycling, metal works, machinery repair, agro processing, the production of plastics and light consumer goods, urban transport and construction. These expose children to a whole new range of health hazards and risks of serious injury from industrial accidents. HR organizations will have to be able to anticipate these new threats to children and be able to respond with advocacy for new laws for ensuring occupational safety or workplace safety, adequate building codes, regulations for ensuring adequate coverage in cases of workplace accidents, fire, earthquakes etc. Equally, important, HR organizations will have to advocate a balanced attention to the other side of the equation: scrupulous enforcement of codes and regulations.



Murdered by Mother



I Drop-in Centre children in a study circle



Members of community watch group at a training workshop

- Joint families where grandparents, aunts and uncles help to intervene on behalf of children are increasingly giving away to nuclear units.
- If present models of economic development continue, gaps between rich and poor will grow more marked, further deepening the sense of uncertainty, social alienation and generalized hostility that are most easily vented at the expense of the powerless, i.e., children and women. Driven by anxiety, men are even likely to turn against their own children. The example of the father who killed his son because he could not afford the cost of the child's medical treatment is a case in point. A more recent example⁵ of the devastating consequences of mounting economic pressures is the case of Nusrat Anam (age 14) and her brother (age 6), Alvi Anam. They were killed by their mother on March 3, 2016, because she despaired for their future.
- Women, as mothers, themselves are not immune to mounting pressures. Whether engaged in wage work or full-time home management, women today experience more stress whether in urban or rural areas. The opening of industrial employment for women and the growth of small enterprises have meant a decline in the availability of domestic helpers willing to cook, clean, wash laundry or do childcare.
- The institutionalization of formal education itself poses problems, exposing children to all the potential risks faced in public places –traffic accidents, petty theft, and sexual harassment. These risks intensify pressures on guardians, especially mothers, who are now compelled to juggle routine work in the office, kitchen and home with trips to and from school to escort their children. In rural areas where distances are more conducive, guardians are spared the trouble. As impressionistic evidence and accounts in newspapers demonstrate, though, this is at the risk of teenage girls facing sexual harassment. Fear of such harassment is frequently given as a reason for the recent spurt in underage marriage in rural areas.
- Media accounts about VAC tend to concentrate on the emerging problems of low-income households –families of rickshaw pullers, hawkers and petty traders, construction workers etc. What happens to children in wealthy households remains a mystery. Here too, the factors that produce stress have grown more forceful. Primary and secondary school education have become extremely competitive. The concern of parents is mainly about the GPA averages at national examinations⁶ (PSC, JSC, SSC, and HSC). In English medium schools, designed to prepare children for admission in colleges in the U.S.A.,

5. Widely reported in the media, including Prothom Alo.

6. PSC (Primary School Certificate), JSC (Junior School Certificate), SSC (Secondary School Certificate HSC (high School Certificate),



Training on child rights international conventions for mothers

UK and Australia, the obsession of parents is with their children getting “A’s”. Given how competitive the job market is, this fixation of parents with children’s academic performance is understandable. However, its immediate consequence is to transform children, who have value in and of themselves, into prized race horses whose worth depends on their performance at the academic race course.

- Finally, the intent and quality of education itself is worrisome. If the example of higher education institutions is an indication, the historical shift from a liberal arts perspective to a more pragmatic perspective aimed at preparing the young for the job market needs to be readjusted. Ultimately, education cannot be reduced to mere skills-training only and needs to deal with social values. While advanced degrees in business management, computing and engineering have their place in preparing the next generation of elite CEOs, financial investors, and IT innovators; and polytechnic high schools are essential to preparing youth for operating and maintaining the next generation of machinery and equipment; the larger role of education is to enable learners to raise questions about the goals for living in society and how best to strike a balance between own needs and that of one’s neighbour, and of the larger public. The same applies to human relations with the environment.

CONCLUSIONS

Currently, ASK responds to VAC through a number of measures. It focuses on working children who are most at risk of violence, and seeks to enable them to eventually find an exit from child labour. Accordingly, ASK sponsors a multi-pronged effort that combines primary school education and opportunities for subsequent mainstreaming into government secondary schools, with intensive social mobilization to create child-safe communities.

In 2015, ASK provided primary school education to a total of 2,469 working children, of who 15 per cent were involved in domestic work; 4 per cent, in begging; and 81 per cent in “miscellaneous” forms of employment that include waste recycling, shop assistants, helpers assisting passengers get on and off public transportation etc.

The organization’s focus in social mobilization is to reinforce community willingness and capabilities for ensuring child safety, in particular the security of child workers. This is through training and engagement in a continuous stream of activities that create interest because of their pace, engaging format, and ability to create a sense of community —shared identity—among a wide spectrum of people and institutions, all of whom play critical roles in determining what happens to children in a neighbourhood: parents, employers, elected and informal local leaders; hospitals, schools, youth clubs; as well as government officials from the departments of police, health and education.

However, if the present trends in VAC continue, HR organizations will have to turn attention beyond providing an education within the framework of present assumptions to more national level concerns that have to do with education policies regarding social values that affect attitudes towards using and accepting confrontation and violence as tools for *preventing* --not merely resolving conflict. To what extent do our schools, colleges and universities go beyond merely preparing the next generations for the job market to enabling them to consider issues like: In the interests of social justice and economic justice, what balance do we need to strike between individual self-fulfilment and ensuring the needs of others? In the interests of the long-term survival of humankind, what is the desired equilibrium between the needs of industry and ever-rising levels of consumption, and the robustness of our environment? Is there a connection between the constant stream of violent entertainment in children's cartoons and in adult media fare, and the growing brutality of social interactions? How do we deal with the latter without infringing free speech.

The brunt of the numerous meeting and workshops is emerging HR perspectives about the entitlements of children, the negative implications of using child labour, and the value of positive child guidance and child management, in enabling children to develop their full potentials and, ultimately evolve into responsible and contributory citizens.

B. RECENT TRENDS IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime⁷, human trafficking is the second largest criminal industry in the world after the arms industry. The industry earns \$150 billion a year from selling men, women and children globally. Women and children account a majority of the victims of trafficking worldwide, and are mainly channelled into domestic work and sex work. Men are forced into in a variety of low-paid jobs in sweat shops, informal sector factories, construction and the like. The most common use of human trafficking (79%) is for sexual exploitation. The second most common form of human trafficking is forced labour (18%).

Although it is a form of “modern slavery”, most States tend to be in denial about its existence. According to UNDOC, many countries neglect to report on or prosecute cases of human trafficking. Although the number of convictions has increased, two out of five of the 125 countries reporting to UNDOC have not recorded a single conviction.

Attitudes Towards Trafficking in Bangladesh

The situation in Bangladesh is no different. A large part of the trafficking here is internal trafficking⁸, which is so embedded in everyday life and routine convenience that it fails to register, but there is greater recognition of international trafficking as a threat to. The latter form of trafficking first began to attract attention among women and NGOs, in the 1990s. At the time, reports about large numbers of women and girls having been smuggled out of Bangladesh and into India, Pakistan, and the Gulf States stirred considerable interest, especially because it was discovered that most of the individuals trafficked had been placed in brothels. A 1997 survey⁹, undertaken by the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association, found that Bangladeshi girls alone accounted for some 300,000 workers employed in brothels in India. Others attempted to estimate the annual rate of trafficking from Bangladesh, one such estimate placing the number of women and children trafficked from Bangladesh to India, Pakistan and the Middle East at 20,000 per year. Another attempt offered a much grimmer picture, asserting that the rate at which *girl children alone* were being trafficked from Bangladesh to or through India, was as high as 50,000 a year.

2015: A Turning Point

Events in the first half of 2015, though, were to have a decisive impact on public attitudes towards trafficking. In May, newspapers shocked the country with news about the discovery of mass graves in Thailand. The graves, they added, contained hundreds of bodies of people suspected to be Rohingyas

7. UNDOC report on human trafficking exposes modern form of slavery, <http://www.undoc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in>

8. Internal human trafficking in Bangladesh exists in the form of child domestic workers who work without the benefit of explicit contracts, child beggars who are kidnapped and deliberately maimed by gangs to increase their appeal, young boys place in dismal workshops and hazardous factories by solicitous parents anxious to improve household income.

9. For details about this and other estimates that follow, see Human Trafficking: A Security Concern for Bangladesh, in *Issue Briefing* August 9, 2011, Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies.

" We gave them fuel and asked them to proceed. Our business is that they don't enter Indonesia because Indonesia is not the destination"



A typical trawler carrying migrants to Southeast Asia

fleeing religious and ethnic persecution in Myanmar, and migrants from Bangladesh seeking jobs in Southeast Asia. In the popular mind, mass graves were associated with the 1971 genocide in what was then East Pakistan. Nothing compared in effectiveness with the news, flowing in from international and national media, linking trafficking with mass graves

The graves were discovered in Sadao district in Thailand's Songkhla province. It was reported that the migrants had been tortured or starved to death. Almost immediately after the discovery of the first grave, more than 50 Thai police were arrested for their suspected involvement in the killings. Subsequent news relentlessly added more details about the brutality visited on Rohingyas and Bangladeshis. More mass graves were found on both sides of the border separating Thailand from Malaysia.

It was learned from locals that the migrants had been brought over by sea to Thailand and then moved into camps that had been built to hold the migrant job-seekers until trucks were readied to transport them, by land route, over to Malaysia. Somehow, the old system of trafficking migrant labourers had been transformed into a new system. Instead of forwarding migrants to jobs in Malaysia, the traffickers had begun to use people as hostages in abduction. Captives were instructed to call home and ask their family to pay for their ransom. Those who failed to secure the money were beaten or starved to death.

On May 22, the BBC¹⁰, provided clues to a chilling business model, which confirmed the transformation of trafficking in to kidnapping. According to this model, Thai criminal networks, which included members of the police, purchased people by the boatload. The price for a cargo of 300 people, as BBC learned from several sources, including Thai police, was \$20,000 or more. Then the captives were held in the jungle until their families paid a ransom, usually \$2,000 - \$3,000 per person, a huge sum for families whose ultimate aspiration is low-paid employment in Southeast Asia.

10. Jonathan Head, Southeast Asia Correspondent, *Sold for Ransom*, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-328358.

Subsequent weeks brought even worse news about the fate of migrants. By clamping down on the traffickers and the holding camps in Thailand, the police had forced traffickers into retreat. The latter were now abandoning boatloads of migrants on the high seas, leaving their human cargo to their own devices. On May 11, reports in the media that Malaysia and Indonesia had rescued four boatloads of 2,000 Rohingya, including women and children, brought some relief. At least, the Rohingyas were not being abandoned to the high seas. The very next day (May 12), though, brought bad news: a boat carrying one-fifth the numbers of migrants, (400 people), was towed out of Indonesian waters and set adrift. The migrants were from Myanmar and Bangladesh. A spokesman from the Indonesian navy was quoted as saying (BBC):

Vivid photographs of traumatized migrants, suffering from thirst and hunger, helplessly hanging out of orphaned boats served to underline a growing reality for audiences in Bangladesh: Despite its potentials



Source: ASK Bulletin June 2015

for reducing household poverty, the risks of illegal labour migration was of dubious value. With weak laws and indifferent law enforcement, legitimate labour migration in countries like Bangladesh was prone to degenerating into trafficking. Even licensed agents, who recruit against known job availabilities, were vulnerable to switching contracts at the destination. Consequently, recruits were being compelled to accept much lower-paying jobs with far less attractive terms of employment.

2012: Beginnings of Trafficking in Bangladesh

This new reality had been in a state of formation since the early 2010s when rumours of irregularities in the manpower trade to the Middle East began to surface. By 2012, reports began to reach Bangladesh that groups of migrants, who believed they were headed for jobs in Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, had found themselves suddenly diverted to Iran, where they were being held in captivity until low-end jobs could be found for them.



Courtesy: BBC. People on the search for family members trafficked to Southeast Asia

The development of trafficking routes to Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia was similar. By 2012, what had originally begun as an innocuous flow of Rohingya refugees fleeing by sea from coves and inlets in Cox Bazar (District) had solidified into a well-known route used to carry Bangladeshi job seekers to labour markets in Southeast Asia.

Reactions to News in 2015

A week after the discovery of the graves in Thailand, the police in Bangladesh began to weigh down against traffickers. Three traffickers were reported killed in a “gunfight” with police in Teknaf. Around the same time, three other suspected traffickers were reported to have met their end in separate incidents.

As for the general public in Bangladesh --- confronted with the sheer cruelty and brutality of actors associated with jobs and employment -- they could only respond with stunned silence. However, the reaction of families whose members had gone missing was panic. This was especially true of families from the districts of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Serajganj, and Kushtia, which normally send out large numbers to jobs overseas. Here, fathers, mothers, and brothers thronged along the shores and inlets around the towns of Cox’s Bazar and Teknaf in search of ways to locate their missing sons and siblings. Armed with photographs, they took to stopping journalists or anyone who looked like an aid worker or anyone who somehow appeared to be *likely* to be of help, pleading for help in locating their missing ones.

RESPONSE FROM ASK

ASK immediately responded to the crisis by setting up a hotline for collecting and disseminating information relating to 300 individuals. Information from the families of the people listed on the hotline, along with the results of investigations into several cases of kidnapping in Teknaf and Cox’s Bazar, provide interesting insights into trends in the human smuggling trade in 2015.

Following up with intensive investigations, ASK visited 50 households reporting sons and young male relatives, who had recently gone missing. Only five of the missing victims had returned home. They ranged in age from 14 to 28 years. Four of the five young were able to return home because they had been imprisoned in Malaysia and Thailand, and were able to access help from the Bangladesh High Commission. The flight home was not entirely free, in one case; the return journey cost Taka 10,000.

FINDINGS

Based on ASK's investigations, it is not possible to talk about the motives of all the groups and individuals involved in the trade in migrants from Bangladesh to the camps in Thailand and Malaysia.

Human Smuggling. All that can be stated with confidence is that the operators who lured and made arrangements for the migrants to travel from Cox's Bazar to the Thai-Malay border acted exclusively in the capacity as human smugglers: not traffickers. The recruits understood that the journey was illegal and had to be clandestine. However, they also understood that all that the recruiters were obligated to do was to provide them

The vast majority of Bangladeshi migrants and Rohingya refugees from Myanmar wanted to go to Malaysia because it was a Muslim country, with similar dietary habits and customs to their own but Bangladeshi job-seekers clearly understood that the recruiters were not obligated to find jobs for them. They were lured into making the journey with promises that jobs were plentiful in Malaysia and, with a little ingenuity, easy to find; but they also clearly understood, and accepted, that the recruiters responsibilities began and ended with providing transport by sea to the Thai-Malay border, and then, by truck, over land route into Malaysia. The average fee charged to Bangladeshis was Taka 2.5 lakh. Because of their situation, Rohingya refugees were charged less (Taka 1.5 lakh). Migrants were told to bring dry food along (*cheera*, sugar, *gur*¹¹).

Recruiting Strategy. The smugglers' approach to selecting and persuading recruits was carefully tailored to their own needs. They targeted young boys and youth from relatively well-to-do rural households, which were engaged in agriculture and trade. Besides owning their homes, the households owned agricultural land, were able to send their children to formal schools up to the secondary education level, and to provide enough relief from poverty as to enable their children to have dreams about international travel, living and working in other countries, and being able to sport smart clothes, phones and accessories. Above all, targets were chosen for their youthful confidence, brashness and their lack of suspicion of anything going wrong.

The recruits had one draw-back. They were dependent on their parents for financial support. The recruiters solved this by postponing payment until the migrants reached the Thai-Malay border. No money was due in advance or at the point of departure. All the recruits were responsible for at this stage was to maintain strict secrecy. They were explicitly forbidden to discuss their impending journey with their parents. They were warned against even any discussion with friends.

Departure. Shortly before starting out for their journey, some of the smugglers approached the migrants for small payments of Taka 10,000 to Taka 12,000 each. This, it was explained, was to cover some problems that had unexpectedly arisen. Other than that, the departure was orderly and took place without parents having any inkling about the whereabouts of their sons or the large sums they would soon have to pay to cover the costs of the latter's bold adventure.

The migrants were taken in small motorized boats, which left from coves and inlets around Cox's Bazar and Teknaf, to more sea-worthy trawlers anchored on the open sea. At the time, interviewees confirmed, it was common to see long lines of dinghies cheerfully setting out for the sea with their cargo of young men.¹²

Progress. The torment began soon after the migrants boarded the trawler and was partly precipitated by interference run by the coast guards near the coasts of Myanmar or the Andaman Islands. Routes had to be suddenly changed; the journey became longer than expected. Refuelling and re-stocking drinking water became difficult. Also, many of migrants ran out of the dry foods they had been instructed to bring along with them. Patience was taxed to the full on all sides. The beatings and floggings started when migrants begged for food, or insisted on more drinking water. One of the migrants, who returned, reported that a trawler was impounded in the Indian territories of the Andaman islands after it ran into Indian coast guards.

11. *Cheera* – dry rice flakes; *goor* – unprocessed brown sugar.

12. The only one of the five migrants to return home without official help was a 14 year old boy who had fallen violently ill soon after boarding the trawler that was to take him across the sea. The trawler was anchored, in wait for the arrival of more young migrants. The pilot of the trawler happened to be from the same village as ailing boy. Out of pity for someone so young, the pilot quietly slipped the boy into a dinghy, which was headed back to the shore to pick up more migrants.

Because of new technology, news of other trawlers being impounded in the Myanmar and Thailand, besides the Andamans, added to the tensions. Foreseeing the possibility of having to abandon their journey, some of the recruiters turned around to suddenly demand full payment of their fees. The migrants were handed phones with which to call home and beg their family to deposit the money to accounts at b-Kash and at the Islamic Bank. Although self-sufficient, their families back home would find it difficult to raise the full amount due to the recruiters at such short notice. Taka 2.5 lakh would entail selling off land and/or borrowing money, both of which took time. Despite this, some of smugglers doubled their asking fee to as much as Taka 5 to Taka 6 lakh.¹³

Families who were able to muster payments in one or more instalments were able buy time for their sons and relatives at sea. Those, whose family could not arrange for the payments, were tossed overboard.

Some of the Bangladesh migrants managed to make it to the Thai-Malay border to find a chaotic scene at the camps designed to hold migrants until trucks could be arranged to take them over to Malaysia. At the same time, demands and threats on the migrants intensified. The holding camps were overcrowded and needed to be constantly cleared to make space for the next batch of arrivals. The calls got increasingly desperate as migrants pleaded with their family not to delay paying the recruiters; while the family begged migrants to make the recruiters understand their predicament.

At the time of investigations by ASK, a majority of the migrants had not returned. Anxious to avert more people from falling prey to the lure of human smugglers and human traffickers, the organization

Initiated an information campaign stressing the dangers of illegal migration. Working closely with school teachers, journalists, lawyers and social activists in Cox's Bazar and Teknaf, ASK helped to organize a long march between the towns of Cox's Bazar and Teknaf, which focused attention on the threats posed by human smuggling and trafficking. Given the eagerness and innocence of the young, and their newly acquired tastes for travel and self-development, information about the hazards of surreptitious migration is indispensable.

EXTRA JUDICIAL DEATHS IN BANGLADESH: 2004-2015

CUSTODIAL

Cause of Death	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
"Crossfire"	88	260	196	34	31	13	6	2	57	41	49	51	828
Gunfire	12	0	0	0	0	0	1	-	2	-	1	10	26
Physical Torture	23	11	26	18	7	8	15	12	7	22	13	6	168
Suicide	2	0	0	0	6	2	3	0	0	1	1	3	18
Other (Ill health. Cause unknown)	0	0	01	4	2	3	3	2	0	0	0	3	27
Total	212	377	362	180	175	229	133	100	91	210	154	192	1067

NON CUSTODIAL

"Crossfire"	46	94	62	81	110	112	87	60	1	2	79	95	829
Gunfire	33	11	71	24	17	89	9	21	17	137	8	18	455
Physical Torture	3	1	7	9	2	2	9	3	7	7	2	5	57
"Mob attack"	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Other: train, cause not known	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
TOTAL	87	106	140	114	129	203	105	84	25	146	90	119	1348

**Police claim that death was caused by mob violence but media attribute deaths to law enforcement.*

13. US \$6,410 to \$7,692

C. RESURGENCE IN EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS & ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

Extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances are the most serious threats to human rights in Bangladesh. They are killings and abductions carried out by the State to eliminate and intimidate political opposition and rivals, and to limit social and political dissent. They deny due process to their victims and are, therefore, without the sanction of the country's laws and its judiciary. As such, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances are crimes committed by the State against its own people.

Because extrajudicial killings and disappearance are sometimes associated with coercive crime control, they are not without supporters in society. Unfortunately, such faith in their potentials for curbing crime is short-sighted. The most dangerous consequence of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings is that they reduce accountability in national life, giving rise to a culture of impunity. In violating its own laws and its responsibility for protecting the HR of its citizens, the State encourages a culture of impunity, a normative environment where people are at liberty to do as they will without fear. Although less dramatic, the implications of corruption for a culture based on the rule of law are just as devastating.

At the level of society, the breakdown in the system of accountability produces predictable outcomes: extortion from business and industry takes root; land-grabbing, attacks on religious minorities and indigenous groups become common.

Inevitable to situations where people feel they cannot trust the police to bring criminals to account, they increasingly take things into their own hand. Mob beatings and vigilante justice gain strength. Coercion and physical force are increasingly used to settle personal disputes.

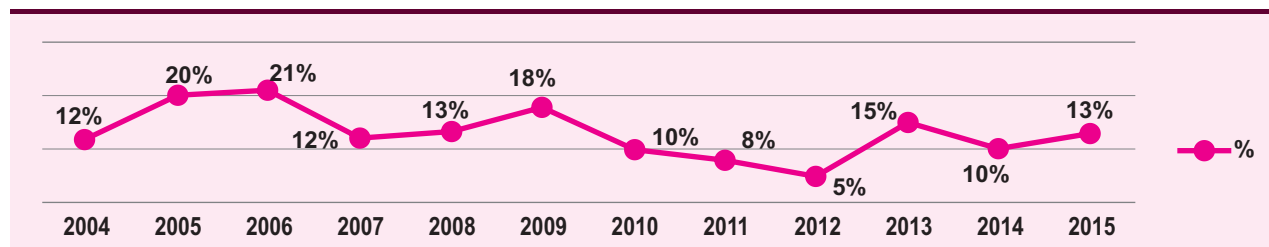
The implications at level interpersonal relations are just as ominous. Generalized uncertainty and insecurity create immense pressures. Abuse and violence, whether verbal or physical, become more accepted. Domestic violence and violence against children become more likely.

TRENDS & PATTERNS IN EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS

The bane of extrajudicial killings first surfaced in Bangladesh in 2004 when the army launched “Operation Clean Heart”. Since, then the fatalities have tended to fluctuate, ebbing and swelling with the heat of contest in the nation, and ranging from a high of 502, when it reached its peak in 2006, to a low of 116 in 2012.

Immediately after 2012, though, extrajudicial killings suddenly tripled to claim a total of 356 lives and, just as suddenly dropped, to 244 deaths the following year—a decline by almost a third. The hope was that the trend would continue and 2015 would return us to levels closer to those achieved in 2012.

EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS IN BANGLADESH: 2004 – 2015 (n=2415)



2015: The Political Context

The increase in extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances in 2015 is not surprising. The intensity of the political clashes between ruling and opposition coalitions, the stakes involved, made the trend inevitable (see foreword). While 143 lives were lost to the violent protests and demonstrations that broke

out between members of the opposition and ruling parties, an even larger number (148) were lost to extrajudicial killings. Moreover, 53 people disappeared at the hands of the police and security forces.

Pressures on the media also mounted. 12 journalists were reported to have received threats from members of the ruling party and another 17, harassed by law enforcement.

ASK's Response to Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances

ASK responds to extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances with monitoring, investigating, and appealing to relevant agencies in government for remedial action. The organization relies on a strong advocacy campaign to urge national and international engagement in protest activities. ASK's advocacy is through statements to the press, conferences, round-table discussions, articles published in its own journal (*The Bulletin*) and in national newspapers and journals. Participation in discussions forums on TV is also important as is organizing letter-writing campaigns.

Monitoring is through ASK's Documentation Unit, which daily scans the media for information about violence and human rights violations, and information provided by a large network of friends that ASK's Investigation Unit has acquired through 30 years of work

the districts and remote corners of the country. Besides violence by the State, ASK prioritizes HR rights violations that affect minorities, women, children and the media; or involve large institutions such as the health and educational services, and industries (garments, ship-wrecking).

ASK believes very strongly that long-term sustainability of efforts to protect human rights in Bangladesh is inextricably linked to increasing the capabilities of communities for recognizing threats to HR, and effectively defending those rights. Accordingly, the Investigation Unit focuses on encouraging the formation of Human Rights Defenders Forums (HRDFs) in the districts, and provides training to help them develop skills in monitoring, investigating, reporting on human rights violation, advocacy, and community mobilization. An important part of training focuses on how to effectively liaise with government authorities to appeal for pre-emptive or remedial action.

By 2015, there was a total 19 HRDFs in operation in the districts, many of them with sufficient experience to take their place beside ASK as full-fledged partners who were able to make a substantial contribution. In terms of investigations alone, HRDFs completed a total of 61 investigations against 85 undertaken by ASK staff, raising the total number of investigations, which ASK could use for purpose of advocacy to 146.

Patterns in Extrajudicial Killings

Officials evidence a greater sensitivity to the negative implications of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances but much is still wanting.

- When they first began under the aegis of "Operation Clean Heart", the usual reason cited for death was sudden "heart arrest". Since then, more credible explanations are cited as the cause of death. Even so, some of explanations offered appear implausible. For example, in 2004 five known cases of extrajudicial killings were explained away by attributing them to attacks by mobs. Recently, though, causes like "train accidents" have begun to appear.

2004-2015: Causes of Death in Extrajudicial Killings

Causes of Death	Custodial	Non-Custodial	Total
"Crossfire" (in custody)	828	829	1657
Gunfire (in custody)	26	455	481
Physical trauma and injury	168	57	225
Suicide, illness, mob attack, hit by train, cause unknown	45	7	52
Total	1067	1348	2415

Source: ASK Documentation Unit

- The number of deaths while in the custody of the police or other law enforcement agencies is high, and attests to low concern for the rights of prisoners. Out of a total 2415 extrajudicial deaths, between 2004 and 2015, 1067---almost 45 per cent--- occurred while victims were in the hands of law enforcement.
- Torture as a tool in interrogation and intimidation

appears to be widely used against prisoners. Between 2004 and 2015, nearly 10 per cent, of extrajudicial deaths, were due to the accused being hit, punched, kicked and subjected to physical trauma from direct bodily force. A majority of the 225, to die from torture, met their death while under custody. Those in custody were four times more vulnerable to dying from physical torture. People dying from torture accounted for 16 per cent of total custodial deaths, but 4 per cent of non-custodial deaths.

- Being shot by a gun is given as the main cause of death in extrajudicial killings. Out of 2415 extrajudicial deaths, total of 2,138 (almost 90 per cent) deaths were caused by bullets from a gun.
- According to the authorities, the majority of deaths from being shot occur in “crossfire” where the victim is accidentally hit during an exchange of bullets between law enforcement and criminals. Evidence from investigations by ASK, as well as reports by the media, suggest that many of the deaths ascribed to crossfire are more properly viewed as the consequence of planned action by government agencies. The accounts given to explain one crossfire killing after another are mechanically repetitious; make no attempt at subtlety, and lack credibility. From the description of one “crossfire death” to another, the stories remain the same. There are three main elements in the stories:
 - The victim was arrested or picked up for questioning for their suspected involvement in criminal or anti-State activities (involvement in robbery extortion, using lethal weapons or carrying bombs).
 - During the interrogations, he confessed to the alleged crime(s) and agreed to lead law enforcement to co-conspirators.
 - Upon seeing the police/authorities, the latter opened fire on them. In the confusion, the victim was struck by a bullet and died.

Patterns in Enforced Disappearances

Longitudinal data on enforced disappearances are missing but it has long been obvious that the line separating extrajudicial killings from enforced disappearances is very thin. To disappear at the hands of the authorities means a high probability of encountering death. According to ASK's documentation, in 2015, a total of 55 people disappeared after they were picked up by the police and other State agencies. Of these, a majority (70 per cent) were never traced and presumed dead; 16 per cent traced but discovered to have died; another 14 per cent of the missing were also traced but found arrested and living in jail. Only 10 per cent of the disappeared returned and were reunited with their families.

Enforced Disappearances in 2015

Never traced & presumed dead	35
Traced but found dead	8
Traced but shown under arrest	7
Returned to family	5
TOTAL	55

Attitudes of the Police

ASK's investigations confirm that police demonstrate little interest in locating the “disappeared” and little empathy for the anguish of the families who are left behind. Witnesses report that the police are unsympathetic and uncooperative. Instead of helping, the police appear more interested in discrediting evidence supplied by families of the missing and thwarting their efforts to locate their loved ones.

- While eye witnesses invariably report that a victim was picked up by members of law-enforcement agencies, such as the police, or staff from DB (Detective Branch) or RAB, the police consistently deny the involvement of any members of law enforcement; or claim that they have no knowledge of either of the victim or the victim's present whereabouts. Taking the initiative to make queries with colleagues or other police stations is out of the questions.
- If the “missing” is arrested or picked up from an anonymous place (market, roadside), the police make no effort to inform the family about the action.. Relatives and kin become aware of the situation only after they realize that the individual has been missing for an unusually long time.
- Although a “GD” or written complaint is required to formally activate a search, the police discourage clients from filing a GD. It takes courage and persistence to persuade the police to relent. When this

happens, the police discourage any mention of government agencies being involved in the disappearance.

- The police are not very interested in conducting the search or in keeping families informed about the progress of their search. If the family shows signs of dissatisfaction, they are warned against considering any legal action against the police, e.g., filing a complaint against the police for negligence or dereliction of duty.
- While hoping against hope, families of the disappeared suspect that a disappearance inevitably means death. This is especially true of families of political activists. Consequently, when a family has exhausted all possible avenues of search (visiting jails, and friends or places associated with the disappeared) they shift their attention to morgues. This is where the remains of a large number of the missing surface – bearing signs of torture or bullet wounds.
- Political motivations account for some of abductions and killings. Greed and corruption on the part of the police also play a decisive role. A case study both illustrates the extreme dangers of corruption and the demonizing effect it has on our humanity.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

There is a tendency to exclusively focus on the *political* motivations behind extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. ASK's investigations expose a more complex picture where corruption among the police, and new political arrangements also play decisive roles. The following case study is one of many examples of the effect of police corruption, which ASK unearthed in 2015.

CASE STUDY

2 Feb. 2015: At the height of political demonstrations and clashes on the streets in Dhaka city, a businessman, living in Section 11 of Mirpur area in Dhaka, received a phone call at 4 P.M. The caller introduced himself as a Sub-Inspector of police from Pallabi Thana. The caller demanded Taka 5 lakh –an exorbitant sum of money (\$6,250) for middle class households--- and directed the businessman to meet him near the offices of a NGO, also located in Mirpur. On arriving, the businessman was escorted into a waiting microbus and held captive. His captors then called his family on a mobile phone, instructing them to meet the entourage but at a different location close to a *Thana* in the Mirpur area.

- When his father arrived, he saw his son sitting in the microbus. Standing outside, he was told by another policeman, who introduced himself as Sub-Inspector Arefin, to bring the ransom money.
- At 10 P.M the same day, the father returned to the spot with only Taka 20,000 on him. The microbus was gone but he was met by Sub-Inspector Arefin, who got very angry at the paltry sum he had mustered, and warned him of dire consequences if he failed to return with at least one lakh (Taka 100,000).

3 Feb. 2015: The next morning, the father got a call telling him to bring Taka 1 lakh straight away. Or else, he could forget about ever seeing his son again.

- By 6 P.M., the father had managed to put together only half of the 1 lakh demanded (Taka 50,000) and went to meet Sub-Inspector Arefin. The latter was very angry and warned that if he failed again, the police would implicate the son in a contrived case of political violence, i.e., destroying property or setting vehicles on fire. The man offered to take the father on a bus to see the son but, unaccountably, dropped him off mid-way.

4 Feb 2015: Not hearing anything from the police all day, the father finally called Sub-Inspector Arefin at 8 P.M. the next day. Always prompt about picking up the phone, Arefin failed to do so.

Feb 4, 5 and 6: The father spent all of the next three days trying to reach the police on the phone.

7 Feb. 2015.

- Of February 7, the father visited the morgue and discovered his son's body.
- He was told that his *son had died three days, on January 31.*

Not all members of the police force are corrupt. There are some who cling to older ways but they are frustrated at the way local political elites repeatedly undermine efforts to bring criminals to account. When, after much effort, the police finally have sufficient evidence to make an arrest or succeed in apprehending a known criminal, an influential local politician often turns up at the police station to bring pressure on officers to let the suspect go. The cultivation of muscle power by political leaders in Bangladesh is well known.

Another source of frustration for the police is the ease with which offenders are able to secure bail from the courts. Again, corruption,--this time at lower rungs of the judiciary – is suspected to be at play.

SECTION THREE

ASK's UNITS IN 2015: THEIR WORK & ACHIEVEMENTS

A. AWARENES RAISING AND STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS UNIT (HRAU)

One of the major obstacles to protecting of HR in Bangladesh is a general lack of public awareness about not only their human rights but even their *legal rights*. Another added dimension to the problem is people's indifference to seeking redress. The Human Rights Awareness Unit responds by attempting to raise awareness about legal rights and human rights, and build capacity for demanding justice. It focuses on developing the capabilities of high school children and youth in the districts to act as catalysts of HR awareness, and trains them to use drama and performance to engage audiences. The plays are open-ended and designed to encourage discussion and debate with the audience once the performance ends. The Unit provides training in legal rights and HR, on the one hand; and how to develop scripts, produce and stage open-ended plays, and facilitate discussions with the audience, on the other.

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

Human Rights Awareness Unit: Key Activities in 2015:

- No. of people reached through HRA sponsored drama shows and day celebration events in working area Jan through Dec 2015. 253,000 (approx.)
- No. of MNP members & BNAD members, including guide teachers, who have been trained. 633
- No. among them, including guide teachers, who are "advanced", i.e., able to function as Local Facilitators, responsible for regularly conducting workshops. 50
- No. of MNP and BNAD members (among 633 trained) who are able to function as assistants to Local Facilitators of workshops. 150
- No of schools, which have adopted and are successfully running action theatre course as an extra-curriculum activity. 52 (in 13 districts)
- No of students enrolled in BNADs at schools. 1,300 students
- No. of MNPs, which are actively involved in performing issue based dramas, organizing day celebrations, rallies and other activities in their area. 61
- No. of Guide Teachers who have been trained during reference period 22 guide teachers
- No. of training workshops the Guide Teachers have facilitated 53 workshops
- No. of advanced MNP members trained during reference period. 30 MNP members
- No. of training workshops, facilitated by advanced MNP members. 130
- No. of shows performed by MNPs and BNADs following training. 1,021 shows
- No. of people were present as audience. 220,000 (aprox.)



Drama Performance by BNAD

Below: Drama performance by MNP



GENDER AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UNIT (GSJU)

The Gender and Social Justice Unit takes up where the Human Rights Awareness ends, and is more concerned to strengthen community HR activism. It facilitates the formation of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) at village, union, and district levels, and encourages them to create local networks for monitoring and defending HR in their localities. The Unit places a strong emphasis on achieving gender equality, and implements its programme in collaboration with “partner” NGOs (PNGOs). GSJ provides intensive training through seminars, workshops, on-the-job coaching, and task-related interactions. Also important in raising HR awareness and enthusiasm are rallies and festive celebrations to observe landmark days in the progress of HR (national liberation day, women's rights day etc.).

CBOs are responsible for monitoring and ensuring justice in their local areas. A central function of CBOs at the levels of village and union is to participate as mediators in local *Salish* bodies, and to protest when rights are violated. At the level of sub-district and district, CBOs are involved in publishing HR situation reports and an annual journal comprising articles and poems on personal experiences in HR activism, emerging challenges and strategies in HR activism.

In the interests of greater sharing of skills and a developing a strong sense of mission, the programme pays close attention to establishing strong linkages between CBOs at different levels of village, union, and district on the one hand; and between CBOs, and government departments and local representative structures. The former enables CBOs in villages and unions to access (especially trained) HR-oriented lawyers practicing in district courts, while CBOs at district level are enabled to access support for their demonstrations and rallies. The latter, leads CBOs about to feel more confident about their ability to negotiate with people in positions of power.

GSJ takes pains to ensure the viability and resonance of the linkages between CBOs and formal bodies by requiring continuous interactions between them. Such interactions are occasioned by programmed activities that require CBOs to monitor the integrity of social safety net systems, disaster relief programmes, health and education services etc. These require CBOs to engage with formal structures for information regarding the entitlements of the poor and vulnerable groups, followed up by reporting on their findings and, where necessary, protesting corruption. Also helpful is GSJ's objective to strengthen the



CBO meeting at Naogaon



District based human rights reports

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

Key Activities

Activities	Target	Achievements
Workshop on Human Rights report writing for 10 partner organizations & local organizations	20	20
Support in follow up of HR cases by CBOs	55	55
Workshops with CBOs & Social Welfare Dept. on Govt. social safety net mechanism, with CBOs & 2 UP standing committees, etc.	-	-
Upazila wise Annual Planning workshop and council	10	10
Legal camps	100	100
Annual conference of CBOs	1	1
Assist MSP to escort victim to thana, hospital, lawyer, court, hold rally and submit memorandum to authorities	-	159
Participate in Salish	-	193
Dialogue with victims to identify dispute resolution problems	10	10
File cases in assistance with lawyers under GLAF	-	156
Day Observance	20	20
Local level workshop with local departments of Women Affairs, and between MNS & Salishker, etc.	20	20
Escort victim to thana, organize rally, submit memorandum, in case of violence against women, document & disseminate report on violation of human rights	-	72
Tri-monthly meeting of lawyers forum, meeting with the BAR Association	43	45
Cross learning visit of lawyers to Bar Associations	3	3
Workshop on Govt. Legal Aid Fund	10	10

B. CAPACITY BUILDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTORS

TRAINING UNIT

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

Key Achievements

Modules	No. of Workshops		Number of participants		
	Planned	Achieved	Women	Men	Total
ASK STAFF					
1. Orientation to ASK	1	1	7	13	20
2. Orientation on Financial Procedure	1	1	7	13	20
3. Training on report writing	1	1	17	8	25
4. Workshop on Logical framework analysis	1	1	19	12	31
5. Advance TOT on participatory methods, module development & facilitation Skill (8 days residential)	1	1	15	8	23
6. Job related skill development	1	1	30	29	59
Total	6	6	95	83	178
CLIENTS ' OF ASK'S LEGAL SERVICES					
7. Gender: impact of gender on women's empowerment for clients of Halfway Home & MMRU	8	8	142	12	154
Total	8	8	142	12	154
PNGOS & ASK-AFFILIATED CBOS					
8. Training on Human Rights, Gender & Legal Issues for MNP, BNADs & Guide teachers	12	12	129	168	297
9. 3 day refresher & Follow-up training for trainers (BNAD, MSP, MNP, MNS, Guide Teacher etc.)	8	8	117	67	184
10. Supervisory & Feedback training sessions by TRU's senior staff for trainers.	5	5	5	5	10
11. Social safety net provisions & distortions: using RTI for social activism (MSP & MNS)	10	10	184	66	250
12. Orientation to accessing government legal aid for outreach group members.	2	2	45	13	58
13. Monitoring & Evaluation training PNGOs	2	2	7	42	49
Total	40	40	495	375	870
EXTERNAL CLIENTS					
14. Training on HR & Gender for BRAC staff	NA	7	47	168	215
15. TOT on communication & Facilitation skills for ASD staff	NA	1	9	14	23
16. Training on human rights & gender relation analysis for university students & development workers.	NA	2	14	25	39
Total		10	70	207	277



Training on Human Rights and Gender Relations Analysis for the staff of HRLs of BRAC



Training on Human Rights and Gender for BNAD & MNP

- ASK staff (HRs concepts and strategies; administrative rules and procedures, security measures).
- Users of ASK's legal aid services –the clinics, half-way home, counselling services. (Gender relations analysis, family and inheritance laws and legal rights, leadership and self-awareness skills development).
- Partner NGOs and CBOs involved in ASK's programmes in the districts. (General HRs concepts & ASK's strategies for HR protection and community organizing. For CBOs, ASK's administrative and financial reporting requirements. More specific skills training is provided by programme units, e.g., the Human Rights Awareness re: script development and open-ended drama production; Gender and Social Justice Unit re: mediation skill, HR data collection and report-writing; Investigation Unit re: investigative methodologies, networking with media, liaising with authorities and appealing to them for redress).
- External Clients. NGOs, government ministries and organizations requesting training.

C. LEGAL AID AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

The of the complexity of demands, ASK's legal aid service is not the work of a single unit but a comprehensive *programme* that requires the involvement of five separate units, employing 50 full-time and 2 part-time staff, and 2 interns¹⁴. In addition, the programme draws heavily on ASK's Training Unit to design and run courses for users.

Component 1: Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU). ASK's Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU) provides mediation as well as "Rapid Response" services. The latter cover referrals to other agencies as well as rescue. Mediation deals mainly with family disputes but also intervenes in disputes involving allegations of mistreatment of women workers, such as women working in the garment industry or employed as maids, child-minders and cooks in homes. An important aspect of its work is post-mediation monitoring thru off-site visits by ASK field staff to monitor compliance with agreements made during mediation. Monitoring plays a positive role in restoring the balance in unequal relationships between women and men, employee and employer. Some examples of agreements that MMRU monitors are non-custodial parents' right to visit children, a wife's right to use the phone or to visit her parents, friends etc.

14. Additionally, ASK relies on the service of external lawyers working *pro bono* or willing to work as counsel supported by the State.

MMRU links up users with services available from other units both within the legal service programme and external to it. It links up users with the Psycho-Social Unit for individual and family counselling; and with ASK's Training Unit, which is external to the legal aid service programme

In 2015, the Training Unit offered a total of eight workshops for users of the legal aid programme. The workshops were attended by a total of 154 individual, 12 of who were men.

These linkages are critical to ensuring security, recovery from psychological trauma and damage, personal leadership development, and economic skills development.

Component 2: the Litigation Unit provides legal representation in formal courts to those open to claiming rights through litigation. The Unit organizes lawyers who are willing to donate time for representing people who cannot afford court and legal fees. The Unit links up users to the same ancillary supports as MMRU.

Component 3: the Psycho-Social Counseling Unit (PSCU) leadership development offers individual and group counselling to users of ASK's mediation or litigation services. It also organizes training workshops in leadership skills development, stress management, positive communications. The Unit has played a

Achievements

No. of visits by survivors	11,391
No of survivors served	3,367
No. of mediations conducted	389
Money Recovered (in Taka)	17,030,703
• No of survivors benefitting from recovery	181
• Av. award per client (in taka)	94,093
Survivors offered legal advice & guidance to appropriate agencies	1,916
Survivors receiving "other forms of rapid assistance"	577



A picnic at the National Zoo for women at the Half-Way at picnic



PSC staff facilitated a training on Basic Counselling IPC & VAW at Dhaka Ahsania Mission on request



Group counselling at Half-Way Home

pioneering role in introducing counselling to Bangladesh and continues to serve in that role. In 2015, PSCU counselled 464 users of ASK's mediation and legal aid services. Of these, 367 were women and girls; and 97, men and boys. 280 people receive individual therapy, while 184 users received group therapy. Among those receiving group therapy, were 119 children from ASK's Drop-in Centres. The children were divided in seven groups.

Component 4: the Support Services and Half-Way Home Unit (SS&HH) provides comprehensive support to women, and their children, under immediate threat of violence or needing temporary housing. Besides housing, food, medical treatment, and counselling, the Half-Way Home provides access to all training opportunities offered by the Training Unit, MMRU and the Psycho-Social Counselling Unit. In addition, the Home maintains a staff counsellor for ongoing support; offers special workshops on handling stress and leadership development; and courses on economic skills and entrepreneurial management.

Component 5: the Outreach Unit is responsible for assisting other NGOs to replicate ASK's legal aid system in the districts. The Unit provides hands-on technical support to NGOs in establishing and

Table: Legal Aid Programme (Part I)

MMRU, LITI and Outreach Units by Number of Survivors Served

Activities/services	MMRU	LITI	Outreach	Half-Way Home	Psycho-social Component	Total
Mediation & Litigation	-	-	-	-	-	4,849
-New (2015)	1018	NA	734	-	-	1946
-Old (Rolled over from previous years)	2349	1009	0	-	-	
Number of mediations conducted	389	NA	300			
Number of total sessions	672	NA	793	-	-	1762
Number of complaints resolved	213	NA	300	-	-	
-New	327	NA	262	-	-	
-Old	62	NA	38	-	-	
Number of cases registered for litigation						
Number of new cases filed	NA	194	52	-	-	246
Old cases pending in court (up to December 31, 2015)	NA	1009	0	-	-	
Total Cases disposed		165	0			
-New	NA	147	0	-	-	
-Old	NA	18	0	-	-	
Money recovered (In Taka)						
-Number of survivors	181	52	0	-	-	
-Av. award client (in Taka) Rapid Action for Survivors	17,030,703	4,437,535	6,886,549	-	-	28,354,787
Survivors receiving "legal advice" (referrals to elsewhere)	1916	203	434	-	-	
Survivors receiving "other" rapid action.	577	NA	88	-	-	665

managing legal aid clinics outside Dhaka. As in Dhaka, the PNGO-managed clinics conduct mediation and offers legal representation in courts. Users are represented by panels of lawyers who are especially trained by ASK, and committed to protecting the rights of individuals who are unable to afford standard court and legal fees.

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

Legal Aid Programme (Part II)

Half-Way Home Psycho-social Counseling

Activities/services	MRRU	LITI	Out-reach	Half-Way Home	Psycho-social Counseling	Total
Number of survivors						
Provide shelter (including food, medical treatment, Psycho-social counselling, and recreational outings)	-	-	-	63	-	63
-Women	-	-	-	48	-	48
-Children	-	-	-	13	-	13
Number of meditations conducted						
Provide counselling (by HWH counsellors & PSC counsellors)	-	-	-	48	464	512
-HWH staff counsellor, 154 sessions to 48 survivors, of which 126 individual & 28 group sessions)						
-PSC counsellors. Each client received 5 to 7 counselling sessions (individually or in groups)						
Provide training						
a) No. of survivor attending 15 half-day workshop on Transaction Analysis by staff counsellors of HWH	-	-	-	119	-	119
b) No. of survivor attending 4 Awareness raising training on HR & family law and gender relations analysis (via ASK training Unit)	-	-	-	59	-	59
c) Vocational training on Batik & Multicolour Tie-die", "Cutting & tailoring" and "Bakery" (via hiring Professional trainers)	-	-	-	15	-	15
d) Recreational Program at National Zoo and National Botanical Garden at Mirpur, Dhaka	-	-	-	15	-	15
e) No. of professionals attending training on Transactional Analysis 101	-	-	-	-	24	24
f) No. of school teachers & NGO staff attending on 'Self Awareness, Effective Communication & Stress Management'	-	-	-	-	59	59
g) No. of staff of Dhaka Ahsania Mission attending training on "Basic counselling ICP & VAW"	-	-	-	-	22	22
h) No. of professionals attending seminar on "Opening the Heart" at Dhaka University	-	-	-	-	102	102
Total workshop participants						

D. ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

DOCUMENTATION UNIT

Low-keyed but vital to ASK's work, the Documentation Unit is the eyes and ears of ASK. Its central function is to monitor incidents of violence and HR violations in the country. Monitoring is through scanning and compiling a list of incidents of violations from nine dailies, two weeklies, one monthly, and two quarterlies. It is through this list that ASK is able to diversify its intake beyond the limitations of its legal aid clinics and respond to more public violations of people's rights that are more easily construed as violations of fundamental rights. ASK begins each day with an Action Meeting, which reviews the list of violations compiled by Documentation, and decide which of the incidents it will follow up through investigation, legal action, appeals to the government for remedial action etc.

The Documentation Unit also maintains a library of books, journals, audio-visual resources, and documentaries, which is open to the public; develops bibliographies at the request of ASK staff, journalists, students and researchers; and distributes ASK's quarterly *Bulletin* and allied publications. Every month, the Unit screens a documentary of film in order to familiarize staff with new HR issues and perspectives.

Key Achievements

Activities	2012-2014		2015	Trend
	No	Average		
Acquire books & documents	1298	432	535	+103
Acquire videos, films, photographs.	36	12	12	0
Develop & distribute bibliographies.	36	12	12	0
• Copies sold	6026	2008	3450	+1442
• Proceeds (Taka)	304,207	101,402	118,111	16,717
Distribute ASK's <i>Bulletin</i> *	72,477	24,117	31,287	+7170
Participation in book fairs	9	3	8	+5
Cumulative and statistical Charts	486	162	288	+126
Total Users	1124	375	452	+77

**Bulletin*. Complementary to donor, PNGOs, HR-oriented NGOs, High Court and Supreme Court, bar associations, NHRC, police, law faculties in public universities

List of Films & Videos Shown to ASK Staff

1. Video about Staff Retreat 2014	8. <i>Anwara Bahar Chowdhury</i>
2. <i>Joy Jatra</i> (Journey to Victory)	9. <i>Mukti Juddhar Itihash</i> (History of the Liberation War)
3. <i>Sol Children</i> (Children of War)	10. <i>Guerrilla</i>
4. Talk Show: Sultana Kamal Discusses Cross-Fire	11. <i>Dikbhranto Nabik</i> (The Bewildered Sailor)
5. <i>Bishkata</i> (The Poison Thorn)	12. <i>Antorjatra</i> (Journey Within)
6. Interview with Three War Rape Victims	13. <i>Hotel Rwanda</i>
7. Talk Show: Sultana Kamal Discusses Recent Trends in Politics	

INVESTIGATION UNIT

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

IU is concerned to strengthen capabilities for HR activism in the districts. The latter entails encouraging the formation of Human Rights Defenders' Forums (HRDFs) in the districts and providing training in HR

Key Activities

Investigations & Follow-Up	Completed	Referred for Action			
		Legal Aid Unit	Advocacy Unit	Appeal to Authority	Media Article
STATE VIOLENCE					
Death in Crossfire (RAB/ POLICE)	12	2	4	11	
Custodial Death by Police & RAB	4	1	1	3	
Physical Torture by Police & RAB	13	2	5	12	2
Missing and Killed	1	-	-	1	
Missing / Abduction	6	-	2	4	
VAW					
<i>Physical torture</i>	3	2	-	2	
ATTACKS ON MINORITIES					
<i>Hindu Community</i>	9	2	5	7	1
<i>Adibashi People</i>	3	-	-	2	2
CHILDREN					
Unnatural death	4	2	2	3	
Torture & Death	4	2	2	3	
INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE					
Garments industry	3	-	1	-	2
Attacks on Journalist	2	-	-	2	
OTHERS					
Political clash	3	-	-	1	
Death of Blogger	4	-	2	4	2
Human Trafficking/ Migration	3	2	2	1	2
Killing by Mob	1	-	-	1	
Slum violence	2	-	2	1	
Miscellaneous	8	1	3	4	5
TOTAL	85	16	31	62	16

Totals in columns 2, 3 & 4 exceed unity (column 1) due to multiple follow-up actions on an investigation.

investigative methodologies, reporting writing, liaising with district administration and law enforcement, and community organizing. Comprised of journalists, lawyers, educationists, college students and the like, many of these HRDFs have begun to conduct investigations on their own and take the initiative in liaising with the authorities for remedial action. At present, there are 19 HRDFs in operation in a corresponding number of districts; many have acquired sufficient experience and confidence to act as adjuncts to IU.

It is noteworthy that, in addition to 85 investigations directly conducted by ASK, the IU was privy to findings from 69 investigations conducted by HRDFs. HRDFs followed up with 169 appeals to various authorities for remedial action.

PUBLICATION AND COMMUNICATION UNIT

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



Key Achievements

Articles written for print & online media.	27	Janakantha, Sangbad, Samakal, Bangladesh Press, Banik Barta, Prothom Alo.
<i>Bulletin</i> . Quarterly. (8,000 copies per issue).	4	(Cover issue: Culture of fear vs. culture of HR (March); human trafficking and kidnapping (June); history of border enclaves- "Chitmahal" (September); laws for protecting child labour.
Books on emerging HR issue.	1	<i>Bangladesher Ain-e Nari Nirjaton Prashango</i> , 1000 copies. (Laws relating to VAW in Bangladesh)
Pamphlets and Leaflets for training purposes.	7	Topics: divorce; dower; Hindu Family Law; <i>Muslim marriage laws</i> ; <i>fatwa</i> ; child custody and maintenance; Preventing Violence against Women and Children law.
Publish ASK annual report.	1	68 pp.
Meetings with readers of quarterly Bulletin.	2	(Designed to create interest in contributing articles to the <i>bulletin</i> . Participants selected from among students and professors from law faculties. Venues in Dhaka and Sylhet.)
Study circles with ASK staff	11	Discussions based on ASK's publications such as the <i>Bulletin</i> and books.

LEGAL ADVOCACY & POLICY REFORM UNIT

The Legal Advocacy and Policy Reform Unit are concerned with issues of fundamental rights and Constitutional rights that closely resemble HR concepts. It uses public interest litigation (PIL) to challenge existing laws on grounds that they violate fundamental rights protected under the constitution.

Besides litigation, the Unit also uses advocacy to promote HR perspectives and demand legal reform of established laws. Methods include preparing drafts of improved laws; commenting draft laws proposed by the government or other agencies; monitoring domestic application of international HR instruments; assessing of the extent to which judgments given in PIL cases are implemented; and introducing the use of PIL in lower courts by strengthening the capabilities of lawyers practicing outside Dhaka city.

Key Activities

PIL	No
Right to Equal Protection of Law (Writ Petition No - 3075/2015), (Suo Moto Rule No-4/2015) and (Writ Petition No - 5541/2015).	3
Right to Health (Suo Moto Rule No-01/2015).	1
Right to Life (Suo Moto Rule No- 08/2015)	1
Right to Freedom of Movement (Write petition No- 10844/2015).	1
Follow up pending cases	13
Workshop with the district level lawyers on PIL	1
Research & Position Papers (Position Papers on Legal Status and Rehabilitation)	1
National advocacy programmes: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) funded by Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)	1



Right to Equal Protection of Law (Writ Petition No- 3075/2015)

MEDIA & INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY UNIT (MIA)

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

Key Activities

Media Advocacy	
No. of press statements prepared	59
No. of press briefings prepared	13
Write-ups (The Culture of Fear versus Culture of Human Rights” and “Where Are We)	2
Organized issue Based workshop with Journalists	1
Organized Press conference titled 'Oppression on Freedom of Thought, Oppression on Freethinkers'	1
International Advocacy	
Hosted the 8th Regional Consultation of ANNI in association with FORUM-ASIA in Dhaka, Bangladesh	1
Prepared the Bangladesh Chapter of ANNI Report 2015 and shared it with relevant actors	1
Translated the ANNI Report 2015 for sharing and disseminate at national level	1
Expressed solidarity/Condolence/Collaboration and Cooperation with International Human Rights Networks and Organizations	11
Organized SAHR's Peace Mission on “Human Rights, Peace and Security”	1
Submitted the Alternative Report on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	1
National Advocacy	
Workshops organized on UPR Mid-Term Assessment and sharing the CRC shadow report	1
Organized the meeting of Human Rights Forum, Bangladesh	3
Organized workshop on Advocacy at UPR and others	1
Assisted NHRC task force members to filed complaints to National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)	10
Conducted fact findings and sent memorandums to concerned authorities	170, 47
Organized thematic workshops on HR and NHRC complaint mechanism	11
Published annual Report on engagement with NHRC published (compilation of 24 complaints filed by the task force members to the NHRC from 2012 to 2015)	1
Prepared and published one source book on Human Rights and Human Rights Defenders	1
Published human rights campaign materials	1
Digital Advocacy	
Maintaining ASK Website	Cont.
Produce and released Monthly E-Bulletin	13

E. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

	Events	Boys	Girls	2015
Occupations of Children Enrolled in CRU Basic Education				
Employed in domestic work	N/A	144	230	374
Involved in begging	N/A	44	59	103
Engaged in "miscellaneous" forms of employment. Programme Achievements	N/A	993	999	1992
Provided first aid, check-ups and healthcare	N/A	797	1015	1812
Provided psychological counselling	N/A	104	150	254
Provided legal support	N/A	1	8	9
Provided warm clothing	N/A	90	192	282
Matched up with a sponsor	N/A	8	46	54
Placed in formal secondary schools.	N/A	12	68	80
Provided vocational training.	N/A	7	116	123
Placed in jobs.	N/A	17	70	87
Special Events for Children				
No. of children's parties organized	4	126	260	386
No of excursions/outings arranged & no. of children participating	5	144	182	326
No. of children benefited from courses in music, art, drama.	N/A	1197	1293	2490
No. of newspaper assembly exercises arranged, and no of children participating.	N/A	685	760	1445
No of workshop for children placed in formal school.	8	160	240	400
No of workshop 'My World'* for children enrolled in basic education.	98	611	970	1581
Events for Adults				
No of meetings for Adults				
-Parents	22	9	364	373
-Employers (of working children.)	14	59	246	305
-Community Watch Groups	13	107	117	224
-Local Government representatives.	6	91	39	130
No. of Training Workshops for Adults				
Parents Workshop	37	10	224	234
Employers Workshop	8	26	138	164
Community Watch Group Workshop	7	59	111	170

CHILD RIGHTS UNIT

ASK's Child Rights Unit plays a strong role in advocacy for child rights in Bangladesh while, at the same time, providing a plethora of services to children designed to ultimately end child labour. The Unit is one of 10 organizations that comprise the Child Rights Advocacy Coalition of Bangladesh, which carries responsibility for developing the alternative report, which is submitted to the UNHCR very four years.

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



Fathers at a discussion on positive parenting

One of the most innovative and forward-looking aspect of CRU's programme is its efforts to create child-safe urban neighbourhoods where community and business leaders, elected representatives, the local police, local offices of government departments, NGOs, hospitals etc. come together to formalize new



A Community Watch Group meeting

institutions. One such institution is neighbourhood watch points that are responsible for maintaining a register of child workers, and regularly monitoring their workplace safety. A related innovation is community boards that regularly monitor CRU's education centres, make decisions regarding participation in community rallies, school outings to zoo, parks etc.

F. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

ADMINISTRATION (ADMIN) UNIT

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

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE (A&F) UNIT

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

PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (PME) UNIT

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

INTERNAL AUDIT (IA) UNIT

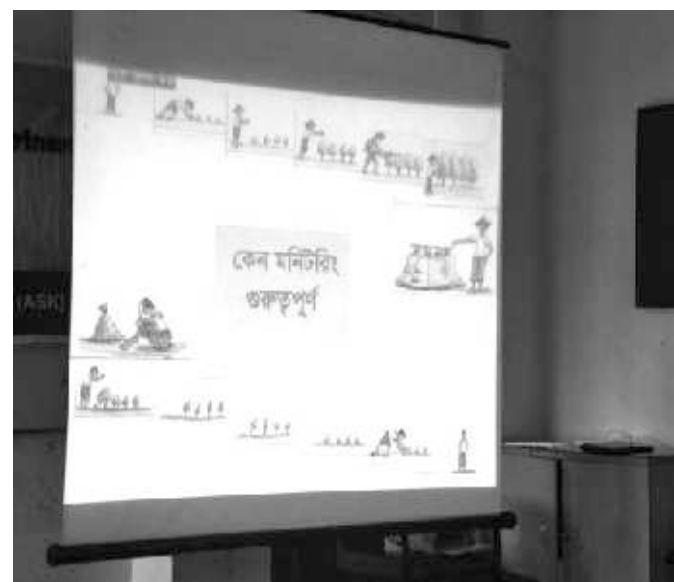
An appraisal or monitoring activity established within an Organization as a service to the Organization. Internal audit functions basically include, amongst things, examining, evaluating, and reporting to the management and the Directors/Members of the adequacy and effectiveness of the component of accounting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



Training on M&E for ASK Staff

PROGRESS In 2015

- ASK developed, finalized and implemented Human Resource Policy & Manual, Financial and Procurement Manual and Internal Audit Manual with the assistance of A Wahab and Co. and funded by SDC.
- 2 orientations held on approved Human Resource Manual, Financial and procurement Manual. A. Wahab and Co. conducted the orientations with all level of staff.
- Arranged 12 interviews for the recruitment of 12 staff.
- ASK provides Health and Group Term insurance for staff through Delta Life Insurance company Ltd. In 2015, 19 staff got benefits from Health Insurance Plan. ASK recovered BDT. 11, 62, 127 (Eleven lakh sixty-two thousand one hundred twenty-seven taka only).
- The Annual General meeting was held in 30th May. 19 General members attended the meeting. The draft annual report, operational plan, and annual budget for 2015-2016, were presented and approved by the meeting. The appointment of an auditor for the year 2015 and 2016 was discussed and approved by the meeting. Moreover, election of the members of the Executive Committee was held and three new members elected for the Executive Committee.
- Under the provisions of the Domestic Violence Protection and Prevention Act 2010, ASK was included in the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs as a service providing organization.
- The global and project audits were completed and submitted to donors, NGOAB and EC.
- Obtained approval of budget from NGOAB.
- 12 reports for DC office and 4 reports for NGOAB were prepared and submitted.
- Four activity and financial reports were prepared for Executive Committee meetings.
- The bi-annual and annual Country Strategy monitoring reports were prepared and submitted to the designated donor.
- The bi-annual and annual reports for consortium partners, and the annual report for NETZ were duly prepared and submitted.



Training on M&E for PNGOs staff



- Organizational annual report 2014 has been prepared and published.
- For the first time, the PME unit conducted two 2-day training programmes on Monitoring and Evaluation. The training was designed for the staff of PNGOs in Sirajganj and Dhaka. Seven women and 42 men participated. In addition, training was provided to 15 staff of ASK in Dhaka.
- Prepared a program proposal for ASK for the period of July 2016-June 2021, and submitted it to ASK's Consortium Donor Partners.
- Organized a 5-day Training Workshop on Knowledge Management Strategy Development for the organization development process under the technical assistance of SDC. The training was conducted by an International consultant, Mary Ann Brocklesby. Also organized two 2-day workshops on Knowledge Management Strategy Development for ASK staff.
- As a result, the Knowledge Management and Learning Strategy for ASK developed.
- Prepared yearly operational plan (AOP) and budget for 2016.
- PME unit staff monitors and assesses ASK programmes on a regular basis. This is done by visiting different working areas of ASK to observe. PME staff observed its programmes and provided suggestions and feedback about the programmes. After every monitoring visit, PME staff prepared monitoring report and shared with ED and then gave it to concerned unit. Monitoring reports mainly focused on process such as documents, participation in different events, participant's selection, client dealings, implementation of operational plan in the field etc. PME also followed up their observations. In the working meeting and Operational Planning meeting of GSJ, Outreach and HRA unit, PME shared their



Knowledge Management Strategy Development Training Workshop



field observations with the PNGOs and CBOs. Moreover, in quarterly basis, PME shared the program progress and monitoring feedback in the monthly coordination meeting of Sr. management. During field visits, PME also tried to understand how the organization collaborated with its PNGOs and other partners, what their monitoring mechanisms and reporting system were and what the impacts of those programmes were so far. In this reporting period, PME monitored the progress of ASK program in 12 working areas and submitted reports. In addition, shared monitoring feedbacks with PNGOs in the annual working meetings.

- ED of ASK participated in national and international conferences seminars and meetings on Bangladesh Genocides & Justice, on death of bloggers, Human Trafficking by sea, current political violence and burn victims, governance in the readymade garment sector, Rana Plaza, 8th Regional Consultation of the Asian NGOs Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI), Chitmoahal, rise of religious fundamentalism, extremism, HR, Peach and Secularity, Freedom of Expression etc.; national workshop on ICCPR; participated in different human chains. She attended meeting with foreign delegates and donors agencies and Embassies; meeting with DC & Law Commission Office. She also attended TV shows and programmes covering issues on human rights, minority rights, rape, security of women human trafficking, present government, International women's day, freedom of expression, VAW, victory day, early marriage, child harassment, secularism, climate change, Rajon & Rakib murder etc. in different media. She attended board meetings, seminars & other meeting of TIB, BRAC University, CHT, CPD, WE CAN etc. She attended staff retreat and internal meetings and workshops organized by different programmes of ASK. She also visited different programmes of ASK outside Dhaka.

ANNEXURE

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)
Statement of Financial Position
as at 31 December 2015

Particulars	Note	Strengthening Activism Towards HR Culture in Bangladesh	Prevent Child Begging Project	Monitoring Child Rights Situation in Bangladesh	A Study of Sexual Violence and Impunity	National Advocacy on Beijing 120 and Post 2015 Development Agenda	General Fund	2015	2014
Assets:									
Non-current Assets:									
Property Plant & Equipment	3	8,834,632	287,511	-	-	-	36,762,569	45,884,712	48,828,056
		8,834,632	287,511	-	-	-	36,762,569	45,884,712	48,828,056
Current Assets:									
Advance & Security Deposit	4	63,831,054	267,448	252,819	35,574	-	97,504,736	161,891,632	147,082,327
Membership Subscription	5	1,187,555	-	-	-	-	1,259,000	2,746,765	1,300,000
Stock of Stationeries	6	-	-	-	-	-	1,800	1,902	1,000
Fund Receivable	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Advance	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	593,657
Cash & Bank Equivalents	9	62,643,389	267,448	252,819	35,574	-	95,941,916	159,143,167	145,187,070
Total		72,665,686	554,959	252,819	35,574	-	134,267,305	207,776,343	195,910,382
Equity & Liabilities:									
Capital Fund	10	70,472,164	(514,051)	(47,181)	(47,528)	(38,543)	134,264,305	204,089,866	194,814,147
Gratuity Fund	11	70,472,164	(514,051)	(47,181)	(47,528)	(38,543)	89,361,406	159,186,436	152,575,035
		-	-	-	-	-	44,003,400	44,949,400	41,238,512
Current Liabilities:									
Liability for Expenses	12	2,193,522	1,069,010	300,000	82,902	38,543	2,500	3,686,477	1,096,235
Loan from ASK Current Fund		-	310,000	300,000	82,902	38,543	-	2,876,432	1,394,075
Advance Membership	13	-	870,000	-	-	8,543	-	867,543	-
Subscriptions		-	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,500	2,500
Total		72,665,686	554,959	252,819	35,574	-	134,267,305	207,776,343	195,910,382

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements and are to be read in conjunction therewith.

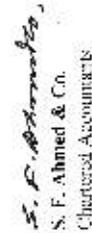

Executive Director



Dated: Dhaka;
27 October 2016

Signed in terms of our separate report of even date annexed.


Director (Finance)


S. F. Ahmed & Co.
Chartered Accountants

ASK: SUPPORT SYSTEM

Unit	Number of Unit-Supported CBOs	Working Areas
HRA	Biddalaya Nattya Dal (BNAD): 52	13 Districts
	Manobadhikar Nattaya Parishad (MNP): 13	
GSJ	Manobadhikar Songrokkhan Parishad (MSP): 10	10 Districts
	Manobadhikar Nari Samaj (MNS): 10	
	Manobadhikar Ainjibi Parishad (MAP): 10	
Outreach	Lawyers Forum: 7	7 Districts
Investigation	Human Rights Defenders Forum: 19	19 Districts (Unit itself conducts investigations in all districts)

LOCATION OF BNADS: SCHOOLS & DISTRICTS (52)

Dhaka: Dhanmondi Kachikantha High School, Rayer Bazar High School, Lalmatia Girl's School, Ali Hossain High School.

Gazipur: Harinal High School, Mofizuddin High School, Razia Sultana Girls High School, Neelerpara High School, Gazipur.

Gaibandha: Sadhinotar Rojot Joyonti Girls High School, Rebeka Habib Girls High School, Tulshighat Kashinath High School, N.H Modern High School.

Jhenaidah: Shisukunja School & College, Jheinaidah S.P. Secondary School, Shaheed Smrity Bidyapith, Jheinaidah Wazir Ali High School & College.

Joypurhat: Khanjanpur Mission Girls High School, Joypurhat Girls High School, Dogachhi High School, Kasiabari High School.

Kishoreganj: Arjot Atorjan High School, Ajimuddin High School, Kishorganj Girls High School, Zilla Shoroni Girls High School.

Kushtia: Kolokakoli Secondary School, Mohini Mohon Biddyapith, Milpara Secondary School, Kushtia High School.

Mymensingh: Mymensing Laboratory High School, Premier Ideal School, The Edward Institution, Mohila Udayan Samiti High School.

Naogaon: Central Girls High School, P.M. Girls High School, Morchula Girls High School, Jonokollan Model High School.

Netrokona: Jahanara Smrity High School, Rajur Bazar Collegiate School, Netrokona Adorsho Girls High School, Dotto High School.

Pabna: Jannat Bibi Jubily Girls High School, Central Girls High School, Selim Najir High School, Shaheed Fazlul Haque Powra High School.

Sirajganj: Victoria High School, Sabuj Kanon High School, Kowmi Jute Mill High School, Hoimobala Girls School.

Tangail: Tangail Shibnath High School, Bibekananda High School and College, Tangail Girls School, Dighulia Shaheed Mizanur Rahman High School.

PARTNER NGOS: 18

Barisal: Association of Voluntary Action for Society (AVAS).

Bogra: Program for Eco-Social Development (PESD).

Chittagong: Organisation for Women's Development in Bangladesh (OWDEB).

Gaibandha Sadar: Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK).

Hobigonj: Hobigonj Unnayan Sangsta (HUS).

Jhenaidah Sadar: Welfare Efforts (WE).

Joypurhat Sadar: National Development Council (NDC).

Kushtia Sadar: Mukti Nari o Shishu Unnayan Shangstha.

Kishoregonj: Peoples Oriented Program Implementation (POPI).

Mymensing Sadar: Social Association for Rural Advancement (SARA).

Naogaon Sadar: Ancholic Palli Unnayan Sangstha (APUS).

Netrakona Sadar: Shabolomby Unnayan Samity (SUS).

Pabna Sadar: Pabna Prostisruti (PP).

Rajshahi: Barendra Unnayan Prochesta (BUP).

Rajshahi: Mohila Sanghati Parishad (MSP).

Sirajganj Sadar: Socio Health and Rehabilitation Program (SHARP).

Sathkhira: Society for Development and Education of Small Household (SoDESH).

Tangail: Rural Poor Development Organisation (RPDO).

DONOR PARTNERS: 8

Donor Consortium

- The Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka
- The Swedish Embassy, Dhaka
- NETZ-Germany
- Danish Embassy
- Embassy of Switzerland

Individual Donor

- Save the Children in Bangladesh
- ICCO Cooperation
- Zubaan

LEGAL AID CLINICS IN DHAKA: 12

- Mirpur
- Johnson Road
- Goran
- Kamrangichar

- Keraniganj
- Dhalpur at Jatrabari
- Victim Support Centre (VSC) at Tejgaon
- Hemayetpur (Savar)
- Gazipur with Department of Women Affairs Shelter Home
- Berri Bandh at Mohammadpur
- Talbag (BILLS) at Savar (Temporary basis, only to support Rana Plaza victims) Azampur Legal clinic, Uttara

CENTRES FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT TO CHILDREN: (15)

Type of Centre	In Dhaka
Drop in Centres	6
Community based Learning Centre	5
Socialization Centre	2
Creative Learning Centre	2

NATIONAL NETWORKS

Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum (BSAF)

170 member organizations to campaign for the implementation of the Child Rights Convention.

Beijing Plus Five for Women's Rights

A coalition of women's organizations to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted by the Government of Bangladesh.

Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP)

Coordinates campaigns for the right to shelter of slum dwellers and mobilizes them to demand their rights.

Citizen's Initiative on CEDAW

A network of 38 organizations formed in 2007 to prepare reports for the UN CEDAW Committee and to campaign for implementation of CEDAW.

Citizen's Initiatives to Address Domestic Violence

A network of 40 organizations formed in 2007 for advocacy on legislation for Domestic Violence.

Child Rights Governance Assembly (CRGA)

A civil society advocacy network of 22 organizations including children and youth organizations.

Human Rights Forum, Bangladesh (HRFB)

A national platform of 19 non-governmental organisations working to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh. Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) having UNECOSOC consultative status took the initiative to form this forum and has been working as the Secretariat of the Forum since inception.

Sramik Nirapotta Forum

A network of 14 organizations concerned with safety at the workplace and workers' health. Formed after the collapse of the Spectrum Sweater Industries building in Savar it has campaigned for workers' safety through the media, and filed PILs to establish corporate responsibility for workers' deaths and injuries.

Samajik Protirodh Committee

A network of 52 women's groups formed to resist violence against women by both state and non-state actors, to campaign for participation of women in public decision-making and to resist the rise of religious extremism. The Secretariat is located in the Bangladesh Mahila Porishod.

The Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh

A civil society network which is working to promote child rights.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Asia Pacific Forum for Women, Law and Development (APWLD)

Formed after the Nairobi Conference. Based in Chiang Mai, Thailand, APWLD networks with legal and women's rights organisations across Asia and the Pacific to campaign for women's rights, to create awareness of rights and to draft recommendations for legal reform.

Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI)

A network of human rights organisations as well as defenders engaged with National Human Rights Institutions in Asia, to ensure the accountability of these bodies for the promotion and protection of human rights. It was formed on December 2006 to strengthen domestic human rights protection mechanisms in accordance with international human rights standards.

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT International)

Works against commercial sexual exploitation of children. Member NGOs in 70 countries and the secretariat is in Bangkok.

FORUM-ASIA (FA)

A membership-based human rights organisation "committed to the promotion and protection of all human rights including the right to development" which has 46 member organizations from 17 countries across Asia.

International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP)

The only regional/international NGO working with the CEDAW Convention as a main tool for change in the Asia Pacific as well as in filling gap between the promise of women's rights and their actual realisation.

Migrants' Forum in Asia (MFA)

Raises awareness about migrant workers' rights and fair working conditions and creates structures of support. Secretariat located in Manila.

South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR)

A democratic regional network with a large membership base of people committed to addressing human rights issues at both national and regional levels. SAHR's basic policy is to identify the gaps in regional initiatives and to undertake activities which do not duplicate the work carried out by other regional or national NGOs.

South Asia Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR)

A regional public forum for the promotion of respect for universal values of human rights, the independence of rights and the invisibility of rights based in Kathmandu.

We Can End Violence against Women

An international campaign against domestic violence. Holds meetings, seminars, workshops and publishes materials on violence against women and personal and collective measures to prevent gender based violence. ASK is currently Chair of the national committee.

Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

An international solidarity network that engages with problems faced by women under Islamic laws.

British Association of Counseling and Psycho-therapy (BACP)

It is a professional body, membership organization that sets standards for therapeutic practice and provides information for therapist, clients of therapy.

ASK MEMBERS

Founder Members

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

Executive Committee Members

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

General Members

Afsana Wahab
 Dilruba Shahana
 Dr. Faustina Pereira
 Fatema Rashid Hasan
 Isaac Robinson
 Khurshid Alam
 Karunamoy Chakma
 Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta
 Advocate Md. Asaduzzaman
 Md. Nur Khan
 Barrister Nihad Kabir
 Neela Matin
 Roushan Jahan Parvin
 Rokshana Khondokar
 Roushan Jahan
 Sultana Kamal
 Barrister Sara Hossain
 Shameem Akhtar
 Sayed Mahbubar Rahman
 Tahmina Rahman
 Tanzina Huq Tiru
 Advocate Z. I. Khan Panna
 Zaved Hasan Mahmood

ASK TEAM

Executive Director

Sultana Kamal

Directors

Md. Nur Khan, Investigation and Documentation

Rebeka Sultana, Director Finance and Accounts

Human Rights Awareness Unit

Motahar Uddin Akand (Sr. Deputy Director), Md. Jahedul Alam (Sr. Coordinator), Jaganmoy Paul, Mst Sheuli Khatun, Solnara Aktar, Mahmuda Akter Munni, Rakibul Hassan, Nirjhar Adhikari, Md. Solaiman Hossain.

Gender and Social Justice Unit

Sanaiyya Faheem Ansari (Sr. Deputy Director), Sitara Shamim, Taufiq Al Mannan (Sr. Coordinator), Mahbubul Alam, Apurba Kumar Das, Dil Afroz Akter, Emran Hossen, Tasnova Alam, Asaduzzaman Newton.

Mediation & Rapid Response Unit

Asma Khanom Ruba, Kuheli Sultana, Nina Goswami (Sr. Deputy Director), Nahid Shams, Selina Akhter (Sr. Coordinator), Shithi Rani Das, Shilpi Saha, Shamsun Nahar, Sumita Bagchi, Mahmuda Khatun Maya, Parul Akhter, Dil Afroze Islam, Shirina Akhter, Suraiya Parvin, Dilara Momtaj Moni, Shanta Ahmed, Ayesha Begum, Kaniz Sharmin, Nipa Monalisa.

Litigation Unit

Salma Jabin (Deputy Director), Abdur Rashid, Farhana Afroj, Mizanur Rahman, Momtaj Begum, Monira Akter, Nasrin Akter, Snigdha Saha, Topan Kumar Sarker, Ataullah Nurul Kabir, Maksuel Chakma, Asadur Zaman, Rumana Farah, Ayesha Islam (Field Worker).

Outreach Unit

Dilip Kumar Paul (Deputy Director), Rehana Sultana, Md. Shahinuzzaman, Md. Mostafizur Rahman, Mithun Kumar Das, Sultan Mahmud Milon, Tangia Alam Tammi, Rahnuma Sharmin, Proma Israt, Md. Kamruzzaman.

Support Service and Half Way Home Unit

Roushan Jahan Pervin (Sr. Deputy Director), Arpita Rani Das (Asst. Coordinator), Syeda Parvez Khanam, Rokeya Begum, Maleka Begum, Mary Baroi, Morzina Akhter Beauty, Mollica Bhattachariya (part-time).

Child Rights Unit (Consortium)

Gita Chakraborty (Sr. Deputy Director), Nargis Akhter (Sr. Coordinator), Meheraj Jahan, Jahan Ara Pervin, Mina Sanyal, Shamsun Nahar Shewly, Ali Akram Tarafder, Kamrun Nessa, Atia Afrin, Rehana Pervin, Nargis Akter Mafia, Nazma Akter, Shammi Akter, Shahana Sultana, Ferdousi, Lutfunnessa, Nahida Sultana Poly, Hasina Nazneen Sathi, Sayeda Nupur, Umme Kulsum Akter Parvin, Anjuman Hossain.

Child Rights Unit (SC Project)

Rasheda Akter (Coordinator), Tamanna Hoq Riti (Asst. Coordinator)

Child Rights Unit (Child Domestic Workers Protection Project, Supported by ASK's General Fund)

Ambica Roy (Coordinator), Luna Sarker, Pervin Akter Baby, Rokeya Begum, Jebunnahar, Shahanaj Akter Bithi, Nargis Akter.

Child Rights Unit (Prevent Child Begging Project-PCB)

Asadujjaman (Coordinator), Salma Ikram, Hosne Ara Hoque, Rashida Begum, Megdaline Tripura, Monira Khatun, Nilufa Ahmed, Mabia Akter, Shaheen Mahbub, Mahmuda Akter Laboni, Monika Rani Dey.

Psycho-Social Counseling

Nasima Akter (Coordinator), Shaheen Islam (Advisor), Runa Khandakar, Sheikh Zadi Rezina Parvin, Sunzida Islam, Nurunnahar Begum.

Investigation Unit

Abu Ahmed Faijul Kabir, Anirban Saha, John Asit Das, Mohammed Tipu Sultan (Sr. Deputy Director), Topote Bhattacharjee, Md. Mahabub Alam, Md. Liakat Ali, Mahmuda Rida Roshni.

Documentation Unit

Fahmida Zaman, Fatema Zannati, Jharna Khanam, Nargis Akhter, Zafreen Sattar (Sr. Coordinator).

Publication & Communication Unit

Kaniz Khadija Surovy, Shaheen Akhtar (Sr. Editor), Amrin Khan.

Media & International Advocacy Unit

Md. Ashik Ahmed, Tamanna Hoq Riti, Aklima Ferdows Lisa, Kamrujjahan Flora, Md. Amanatullah, Ishrat Ashtary, Md. Modaschhir Rahman, Rakibul Hasan.

Legal Advocacy and Policy Reform Unit

Abu Obaidur Rahman (Sr. Deputy Director), Abantee Nurul, Mahjabin Rabbani, Md. Samiul Alam Sarker, Nurul Islam, Shamima Nasrin.

Training Unit

Tanvia Roselin Sultana (Coordinator), Momy Monzury Chowdhury, Tasmin Akter, Md. Sajjid Ahmed, Moshfec Ara, Mousumi Megdalena Chisim, Dewan Noniruzzaman, Mochaddik Hossain, Shovon Shahriar, Rokshana Parvin.

Administration Unit

Md. Moqsud Maleque (Deputy Director), Mahmuda Sultana, Shirin Aktar, Tahsina Ahmed, Sabina Yeasmin, Md. Rakibul Hasan, Md. Haider Ali, Fazila Begum, Md. Mohshin Ali, Nur E. Alam, Zahera Begum, Md. Sekander Ali, Mosharaf Hossain, Anil Chandra Mandal, Mariam Begum, Md. Abu Musa, Mintu Barua, Rizwanul Haq, Abedul Moula, Khokon Gomez, Nurun Nahar Rekha, Amena Begum, Fatema Begum, Laily Begum, Laila Begum, Majeda Begum, Anjoli Baroi, Mst. Nilufa, Md. Moshraf Hossain, Md. Farukur Rahman, Ms. Rina Khatun, Mahbub Alam, Nazmul Hossain, Mahfuzur Rahman, Md. Abu Zafor.

Accounts & Finance Unit

Rebeka Sultana (Director), Md. Mustafizur Rahman (Director, Finance and Admin), Md. Shahidullah (Sr. Deputy Director), Tahera Begum, Philip Arnold, Ishtiak Ahmed Tamanna Nasrin, Paymelia Saha, Masuma Parvin, Sadika Jinat Banu, Shamim Hossain, Mohamad Nazrul Islam.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

Fatema Mahmuda (Sr. Deputy Director), Ibne Sayed Md. Noor Zaman (Asst. Coordinator), Humaira Knanum (Monitoring Organizer), Suhel Ahmed (Monitoring Organizer).

Internal Audit Unit

Nikolas Biswas (Internal Auditor)

SPONSORS OF WORKING CHILDREN: 2015

No	Children Name	Name of Sponsor
1.	Rubel	Zafreen Sattar
2.	Jannatul	Ad. Nahid Shams
3.	Lucky Akhter	Nina Goswami
4.	Hanif	Khairul Islam
5.	Sabina Akter Dolly	Patrizia Heidegger
6.	Suborna	Patrizia Heidegger
7.	Shahanaz Parveen Shilpi	Patrizia Heidegger
8.	Sajeda Akhter	Patrizia Heidegger
9.	Jakir Hossain	Patrizia Heidegger
10.	Shanta	Patrizia Heidegger
11.	Bipasha Rani Gosh	Mr. Tariq Ali
12.	Priyanka Rani Gosh	Mr. Tariq Ali
13.	Ruma Rani Gosh	Mr. Tariq Ali
14.	Suma Rani Gosh	Mr. Tariq Ali
15.	Sharif	Trade Vision
16.	Mahamuda	Trade Vision
17.	Farzana	Trade Vision
18.	Khadiza	Trade Vision
19.	Nasrin Sultana Swarna	Trade Vision and Ad. Salma Jabin
20.	Shahanaj	Trade Vision
21.	Shathi Chowdary	Dia & Duncan Roger Hall
22.	Taniya Akter	Dia & Duncan Roger Hall
23.	Fahima and Khadiza	Dia & Duncan Roger Hall
24.	Al-Amin	Zahirul Islam
25.	Rehana	Zahirul Islam
26.	Shathi	Zahirul Islam
27.	Amir Hossain	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas and Mr. Tariq Ali
28.	Rubina Akter	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
29.	Laboni	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
30.	Rozina	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
31.	Nasrin	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
32.	Fahima	Zahanara Mridha
33.	Taniya	Zahanara Mridha
34.	Bristi	Zahanara Mridha
35.	Laboni	Zahanara Mridha
36.	Akhi	Zahanara Mridha
37.	Mahamuda	Zahanara Mridha
38.	Soniya	Asrafun Hossain
39.	Moti	Shaheed Enam