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# BANGLADESH PROGRAM EVALUATION: PROMOTING GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY (PROGATI) PROGRAM

April 6, 2011

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# **PROMOTING GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND INTEGRITY PROGRAM (PROGATI)**

## **EVALUATION REPORT**

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## ACRONYMS

AC	anti-corruption
ACC	[Bangladesh Government] Anti-Corruption Commission
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AED	Academy for Educational Development
AL	Awami League
ARD	[originally] Associates in Rural Development; [now] TetraTech ARD
BAMU	Budget Analysis and Monitoring Unit [of the Bangladesh Parliament]
BEI	Bangladesh Enterprise Institute
BIPF	Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum
BNP	Bangladesh National Party
BRAC	[1973- ] Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee; now BRAC, a not for profit corporate entity in Bangladesh, the US, and the UK
BRDG	Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance IQC
BUPF	Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum
BWCCI	Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CAG	Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General [of Bangladesh]
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COTR	[USAID] Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
CPI	Transparency International's annual Corruption Perception Index
CSO	civil society organization
CSS	State/USAID Country Strategic Statement, 2005-2010 [for Bangladesh]
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DfID	[United Kingdom] Department for International Development
DG	democracy and governance
DLGP	USAID/Bangladesh's Democratic Local Governance Program
DW	Democracywatch
EC	[Bangladesh] Election Commission
ER	Expected Result
ERD	Bangladesh Ministry of Finance, Economic Relations Division
FBCCI	Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FY	USG fiscal year
GOB	Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
IBFB	International Business Forum of Bangladesh
IC	[Bangladesh] Information Commission
IGS	Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University
ILLG	USAID/Bangladesh's Improving Local Governance by Strengthening Union Parishad and Creating Citizen Awareness program
IQC	indefinite quantity contract
IREX	International Research and Exchanges Board
IREX MSI	IREX's Media Sustainability Index
IRI	International Republican Institute
JATRI	Journalism Research and Training Initiative, BRAC University
KAP	knowledge, attitudes, and practices
KF	Khan Foundation
MAB	Municipality Association of Bangladesh
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals

MFDM	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
MLGRDC	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
MP	Member of Parliament
MRDI	Management and Resources Development Initiative
MSI	Management Sciences International
NCSLG	USAID/Bangladesh National Constituency for Strong Local Government program
NGO	non-governmental organization
PAC	Public Accounts Commission of the Parliament
PMP	performance monitoring plan
PRODIP	USAID/Bangladesh's Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices program,
PROGATI	[USAID Bangladesh's] Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity Project
PS	Parliament Secretariat
RTI	Right to Information Act, 2009
RTII	Research Triangle Institute International
SDLG	USAID/Bangladesh's Strengthening Democratic Local Governments program
SHOUHARDO II	Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities, Title II food security program
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SOW	statement of work
STW	Steps Towards Development
STTA	short-term technical assistance
TA	technical assistance
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TAMIS	DAI's Technical and Administrative Management Information System
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNWFP	United Nations World Food Program
UP	<i>union parishad</i>
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VGD	[GOB's] Vulnerable Group Development program

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (PROGATI) program is to assess the impact and lessons learned from PROGATI for consideration in the design of a follow-on anti-corruption program. PROGATI is a wide-ranging four-year program designed to support the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GOB) in its efforts to fight corruption. Millennium Partners fielded a three-person evaluation team consisting of Kris Merschrod (team leader), Thomas Moore, and Taifur Rahman from late January through February, and the report was written during early March 2011.

The evaluation team undertook an extensive literature review, consulted in Bangladesh with USAID and the principal PROGATI staff, interviewed nearly all stakeholders and local beneficiaries, observed PROGATI activities in a field trip to Khulna, and organized focus groups and other exchanges. On this basis, the team was able to form a comprehensive picture of the nature, accomplishments, constraints, and limitations of the program and to assess the program's performance and results as well as prospects for future USAID programming.

We find that the program suffered extensive delays in getting program components up and running, largely because of factors beyond the management control of the implementing partner. We also find that after four years nearly all of the expected results have been attained, albeit significantly later than originally planned in some cases.

The main constraints during the evaluation were time and timing: 1) the lack of time to review the documents completely before interviewing in order to prepare for more probing and productive first interviews, and 2) the closing of many government and private sector offices because of a general strike, several holidays and the Cricket World Cup during the evaluation team's time in Bangladesh. This situation reduced the number of days on which interviews could be scheduled.

The development challenge that the Mission designed PROGATI to confront was that poor governance, especially lack of accountability and transparency, and accompanying corruption had become a major obstacle to the social and economic advancement of Bangladesh. We found that the Mission's conclusions were part of an international consensus. Accordingly, the Mission's design document and resulting task order that established PROGATI were appropriate, and, importantly, the concept of the program was well received by interim government officials then in office who wanted to address the issue of corruption seriously.

Appropriately, the Mission proposed a balanced approach so that capability and advocacy would form a synergistic dynamic. That is, public institutions, including civil servants and elected officials, would be strengthened in their ability to carry out their accountability functions and be transparent; at the same time, civil society organizations, including media, would be strengthened in their ability to demand transparency and accountability. The inclusion of media training both inside the public institutions and in civil society was an astute insight.

In broad terms, Development Alternatives, Inc.'s (DAI's) response to the task order reflected sound social theory and management. The DAI proposal began with the observation that the key institutions of Bangladeshi governance and civil society were isolated and not interacting, much less coordinating. This was described as a "crisis of fragmented social capital." Appropriately, DAI proposed to apply three principles for their work: 1) bring a critical mass of leaders and managers together to design and guide the reform process; 2) establish relationships built on trust and confidence between civil society media, and government; and 3) pursue opportunities that keep these groups in sustainable creative interaction.

DAI expanded the PROGATI management team to include a broad array of experienced Bangladeshi civil society organizations and consulting firms as well as key partners in the government. This inclusive approach gave PROGATI geographic coverage, multi-sectored perspectives, a diverse array of expertise, and a broad network with which to tie together the fragmented institutions. PROGATI provided a neutral table at which interested and sometimes competing parties could meet, form a consensus, and then move forward.

PROGATI brought into the program several organizations that USAID had earlier supported. It also benefited from knowledge of the results from other internationally supported efforts with local partner organizations. PROGATI did not work in isolation and because of this much of the impact will be more sustainable.

Our conclusion is that PROGATI achieved the principal objectives and also contributed to a broader goal of bringing together in common cause a diverse group from government agencies, local governance associations, Parliament, civil society, the business community, and the media. This initiative is contributing to the formation of an incipient social movement of commitment to good governance.

PROGATI demonstrated strong management skills and effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) techniques that allowed the program, after initial delays to get all of the partners on board, to meet the overwhelming majority of its indicator targets, and to create the foundation for what can become a sustainable long-term social movement toward substantial improvement in transparency, accountability, and responsible governance throughout Bangladesh. The report details the best practices employed during program implementation and also the limitations of some of the indicators, originally designed to measure impact.

Finally, this report addresses the issue of sustainability for all of PROGATI's institution building efforts. We found that the assessment by the USAID Regional Inspector General of the legacy institutions, the Journalism Training and Research Institute (JATRI) and the Parliament's Budget Analysis and Monitoring Unit (BAMU), was premature and that significant advances have been made in recent months which improve the prospects for sustainability.

The evaluation team recommends that USAID find appropriate mechanisms to build on the process begun with PROGATI in an integrated, cross-sector program with an expanded geographic scope and depth of coverage. Such a program needs to be designed strategically in the context of United States Government (USG) and GOB strategies. We further recommend that USAID take measures to avoid a loss of the momentum now evident and to assure coordination within the US Mission and among the concerned members of the international community.

## PROGATI EVALUATION

### I. INTRODUCTION

This is the report of an evaluation requested by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) of its program in Bangladesh for Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity (PROGATI),<sup>1</sup> a four-year effort to support Bangladeshi efforts to combat corruption originally budgeted at \$18.2 million. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact and lessons learned from PROGATI for consideration in the design of a follow-on anti-corruption program.

The report describes the context, the design, and implementation of the program. It then presents the findings and conclusions, identifies lessons learned, and makes recommendations for consideration by USAID. The evaluation took place in January–March 2011. The Statement of Work is at Annex 1. The evaluation team consisted of Kris Merschrod (team leader), Thomas Moore, and Taifur Rahman. Biographical summaries of the team members are at Annex 2. A bibliography of sources for the research is in Annex 3. Annex 4 is a list of persons interviewed. Annexes 5 and 6 present timelines for PROGATI design and implementation in their political context. Annex 7 provides more detail on our evaluation methodology. Annex 8 contains documentation of organizations by specific objective. Annex 9 is a narrative of managerial and administrative development, and Annex 10 is a description of the performance management system.

#### A. The Country and Its People



Bangladesh is located at the northeast of the Indian subcontinent, at the northern edge of the Bay of Bengal. Its land boundaries are with India to the west, north and east, and with Burma to the southeast. The national territory of about 144,000 square kilometers (about the size of the state of Iowa or of England and Wales) is mostly a flat, alluvial plain. The land is traversed by the confluence of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers and is subject to extensive flooding during annual monsoons.

Bangladesh is the world's most densely populated country (leaving aside the urban enclaves of Malta, Monaco, and Singapore), with a population exceeding 160 million.<sup>2</sup> It has the seventh largest population of all countries, and the fourth largest Muslim population (behind Indonesia, Pakistan, and India).

While Bangladesh is experiencing urban migration, about 70 percent of the people still live in rural areas. The population is predominantly of Bengali ethnicity; almost 90 percent of this population state they are Muslims, while an estimated nine percent declare themselves Hindus and the remaining one percent Buddhist, Christian or members of other religions. Life expectancy in Bangladesh is about 68 years, with approximately 80 percent of the nation's population under the age of 40. Current per capita income is

<sup>1</sup> When the acronym PROGATI is pronounced in Bangla, it means "progress"; the "O" and the "A" represent the same mid-level back rounded vowel.

<sup>2</sup> With a population of 160 million, Bangladesh has a population density of 2878 persons per square mile (i.e., 144,000 sq. kms. = 55,598 sq. miles).

about \$750. Life for the average Bangladeshi is a continuous struggle to overcome economic hardship, with about 40 percent of the population living in poverty. Adult literacy is estimated to be approximately 60 percent. Although male literacy is slightly higher, Bangladesh has now achieved gender parity in school enrollment, which is diminishing the gender-based discrepancy in literacy.<sup>3</sup>

Bangladesh's path to sovereignty was marked by political struggle and periods of intense violence—especially at the time of partition and independence from British rule in 1947, and again in the 1971 war for independence from Pakistani sovereignty. The new nation of Bangladesh emerged in December 1971 with many challenges and few resources. Its initial 20 years were characterized by recurrent political upheavals and instability. However, especially over the past two decades, the country has experienced impressive development progress. GDP has tripled, with a doubling of per capita income and dramatic gains in life expectancy, poverty reduction, literacy, and child survival. Bangladesh is among the top performers in human development and is on track to meet several of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).<sup>4</sup> The economy continues to grow at a rate of close to six percent and is rapidly evolving as the rate of growth in the industrial sector (primarily in apparel assembly) is more than twice that of agriculture.

## B. Improving Governance

Advances in economic and social conditions have taken place despite persistent low rankings on indicators of good governance. For example, the World Bank Governance Index places Bangladesh in the bottom 25 percent of countries for political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, and control of corruption, with deterioration in all these categories from its rankings in 1998.<sup>5</sup> This divergence between economic and social progress, on the one hand, and continued political polarization and weak governance, on the other, has been described as Bangladesh's development paradox.<sup>6</sup> There is broad agreement that Bangladesh needs to continue, and even accelerate, its economic and social progress over the next decade if it is to realize the aspiration of becoming a well governed, democratic, middle-income country of opportunity by 2021, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its independence. There is also broad agreement that sustained economic and social progress will require that Bangladesh respond effectively to the challenge of improving the quality of governance.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> There is some variance among national and international sources of economic and social data about Bangladesh. See the website of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, <http://www.bbs.gov.bd>; World Bank Country Data for Bangladesh, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/bangladesh>; World Fact Book, 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html>.

<sup>4</sup> See “MDGs and Bangladesh,” UNDP, <http://www.undp.org.bd/mdgs.php>. A recent study estimates that more than 40 million people in Bangladesh will escape from extreme poverty in the period 2005-2015. Chandry, Laurence, and Geoffrey Gertz, “Poverty in Numbers: The Changing State of Global Poverty from 2005 to 2015,” Brookings Institution, January 2011, [http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/01\\_global\\_poverty\\_chandy.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/01_global_poverty_chandy.aspx).

<sup>5</sup> See “Country Data Report for Bangladesh: 1996-2009,” in *Worldwide Governance Indicators*, 2010, World Bank, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/pdf/c20.pdf>. See also the Millennium Challenge Corporation's Bangladesh Scorecard for 2011, which compares Bangladesh with other low-income countries, <http://www.mcc.gov/documents/scorecards/score-fy11-bangladesh.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Mahmud, Wahiduddin, Sadiq Ahmed, Sandeep Mahain, “Economic Growth and Governance: The Political Economy Aspects of Bangladesh's Development Surprise,” Commission on Economic Growth and Governance Working Paper 22, 2008, <http://www.growthcommission.org/storage/cgdev/documents/gcwp022web.pdf>; World Bank, “Governance and Growth: The Bangladesh Conundrum,” in *Bangladesh: Strategy for Sustained Growth*, July 2007, pages 125-136, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/44813-1185396961095/4030558-1185396985915/fullreport.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> The temporary reversal of the steady progress in reducing poverty in Bangladesh in the context of the global recession in 2007-2008 has been attributed in part to poor governance. Blair, Harry, “Party

Highly credible elections in December 2008 have provided a broad base of support for an ongoing transition to renewed democratic values and, with it, an opportunity for Bangladesh to reform political practices and institutions of governance. Promoting good governance features prominently in the country's development planning.<sup>8</sup> The international community strongly supports this objective. In particular, support for pluralistic and responsive governance is a top priority for the United States in its relations with Bangladesh. These priorities are reflected in the development of USAID's new country development cooperation strategy and exemplified in the PROGATI program.

## II. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

USAID Bangladesh requested this evaluation in order to assess the impact and lessons learned from PROGATI. The evaluation will inform decisions to be made by USAID about any follow-on program and its design. Therefore, USAID will be the principal audience. This evaluation will:

- Test the technical and programmatic validity of the hypotheses on which the PROGATI program was designed to meet the development challenge;
- Evaluate PROGATI performance in reference to the principal objectives;
- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, management efficiency and cost effectiveness, impact, and sustainability and client satisfaction of PROGATI implementation in meeting program objectives; and
- Make necessary recommendations to USAID Bangladesh.

This report of the evaluation will address the following issues:

- The relevance of the PROGATI approach;
- Management and Administration;
- Cost Effectiveness;
- The impact of the implemented scope of work;
- Performance measurement systems of the program;
- Sustainability of the results and impact of PROGATI activities;
- Cross-cutting issues of gender, inclusion, and transparent and accountable governance;
- Synergy with other USAID and other donor-funded Programs;
- Client satisfaction (Government of Bangladesh [GOB], beneficiaries, and other stakeholders) overall; and
- Best practices and unexpected results.

## III. THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The PROGATI evaluation team employed a reiterative process of interviews and document analysis for this diverse and complex program, because, as the work progressed, new perspectives that were not apparent in the initial background information needed to be explored. PROGATI is not the type of

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overinstitutionalization, contestation, and democratic degradation in Bangladesh," in Brass, Paul R., editor, *Handbook of South Asian Politics: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal*, Routledge, 2010, pages 98-117.

<sup>8</sup> See "Promoting Good Governance," in *Steps Towards Change: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction II (Revised) FY 2009-2011*, pages 71-77, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, December 2009; "Economic Growth and Corruption Free Good Governance," in *Outline Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021: Making Vision 2021 a Reality*, pages 12-16, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, June 2010 (DRAFT).

endeavor that can be evaluated with a set of interviews, tabulated data, and pat conclusions. The principal techniques used included literature review; coordination with the USAID Mission; repeated exchanges with the implementation partner, including component leads; interviews with nearly all of the principal stakeholders; interviews with key GOB officials and with USAID program managers and other international partners. The team made one field visit, and organized three focus group sessions. The details of this process are presented as Annex 7 to this report.

The following section presents the team's findings on key issues arising under the evaluation criteria described above.

## IV. THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE AND USAID'S RESPONSE

### A. The Development Challenge — Corruption

International attention focused on Bangladesh with the publication in 2001 of Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which ranked Bangladesh as the country perceived to be the most corrupt of the 91 countries sampled.<sup>9</sup> This negative distinction was maintained in the 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 CPIs.<sup>10</sup> The Dhaka media, particularly *The Daily Star* and *New Age* gave extensive coverage to the CPIs, and the CPIs became the subject of much defensive political discussion and questioning of its accuracy among government circles. Although the CPI has been debated because it records perceptions rather than experience, it is clear that corruption is a serious problem that denies the country and its people many of the benefits of development progress.

The international community began to focus on corruption in Bangladesh in the early years of the new millennium. The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) funded reforms in budgeting and expenditure controls and government audits through the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). These efforts were complemented by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) support. During this time, the World Bank introduced its governance indicators and Citizens Report Card to be used by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations to evaluate and monitor service delivery by GOB agencies and local authorities. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) also sponsored programs in Bangladesh to generate citizen awareness of corruption and transparency and integrity issues.

Between 2004 and 2008, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), in collaboration with the GOB Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), invested in a mass public awareness program through a poster campaign. It also edited and distributed with the Islamic Foundation a book of homilies for use by imams at Friday prayers, referring to the Q'oran's message on corruption. It also conducted a program on personal integrity that reached over 3,000 *madrassas* (Islamic schools); in each madrasa a team of nine top students developed personal integrity guidelines.

The GOB, during the administration of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia (2001–2006), responded to these international concerns by approving the Anti-Corruption Act of February 2004, which reorganized the longstanding but largely inactive Anti-Corruption Bureau into the ACC with greater independence and

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2001](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2001).

<sup>10</sup> The 2010 CPI ranks Bangladesh 134th of 178 countries with a net score of 2.4 on a scale of 1 to 10. [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2010](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010). The most corrupt country is now perceived to be Somalia, followed by Bangladesh's neighbor Burma, called Myanmar by its current rulers, and, successively, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, and Uzbekistan. See also the scores by Bangladesh over the years on the "Control of Corruption" dimension of the World Bank Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>.

authority. Then, in February 2007, the military-backed interim GOB (the Caretaker Government) under Fakhruddin Ahmed agreed to accede to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and to accept a plan of action to come into compliance with its terms and conditions.<sup>11</sup>

BRAC University's Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) concludes in a recent state of governance report<sup>12</sup> that political parties, whichever may be in power at a given time, are the primary vehicles for the aggregation of societal interests and the provision of safety nets, based on patron-client relationships for large parts of the population, instead of an effective state. That report attributes the breakdown in political governance, and thus of transparency, accountability, and integrity, to a) the design of the state and its institutions, b) the clientelistic nature of politics fuelled by greed, and c) the nature of confrontational politics.

Fighting corruption was the principal governance issue being addressed by most international agencies and the GOB when USAID began to design the PROGATI program. This emphasis continued throughout PROGATI implementation and the continuing prominence of the corruption issue is manifested by the current government's devotion of a specific chapter to this subject in its medium-term development vision, "Outline Perspective Plan of Bangladesh - 2010-2021."<sup>13</sup>

In 2004 USAID commissioned a knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) survey, which was conducted by ARD, Inc.<sup>14</sup> That same year ARD also conducted a Democracy and Governance Strategic Assessment of Bangladesh, completed in September 2004. Additionally, USAID contracted Management Sciences International (MSI) to conduct an assessment, "Support for Development of a USAID/Bangladesh Anti-Corruption Strategy," encompassing all sectors of USAID assistance, completed in December 2004.<sup>15</sup> USAID/Bangladesh adopted its new Anti-Corruption Strategy in January 2005. In September 2005 USAID published its Strategic Statement for USG Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-2010, including as the first of its four objectives "More Effective and Responsive Democratic Institutions and Practices." In June 2006, USAID contracted Nathan Associates to provide an "Anti-Corruption Interventions in Economic Growth" report. Finally, in February 2007, USAID's Activity Design Document for its Anti-Corruption Program was approved and became the basis for PROGATI.

Concurrently with the USAID assessment, the issue of corruption became publicly prominent as a political issue in the context of government transition following the conclusion of the term of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. Between 29 October 2006 and 11 January 2007, the constitutionally mandated caretaker government under the leadership of Iajuddin Ahmed prepared the way for elections scheduled for 22 January 2007. However, on 11 January 2007, a state of emergency was declared and a military-backed, interim government led by a former World Bank official, Fakhruddin Ahmed, was installed with emergency powers. This was a response to the perceived rigging of the elections scheduled for 22

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<sup>11</sup> The interim administration of the GOB published its assessment, *UNCAC: Bangladesh Compliance and Gap Analysis*, in July 2008. Among areas of progress cited are the *Money Laundering and Prevention Ordinance (MPLO)* of 2008, and the *Public Procurement Rules*, greater independence of the ACC, and the reconstitution of the Public Service Commission, the Election Commission, and the formation of the Regulatory Reform Commission (p. 181).

<sup>12</sup> *The State of Governance in Bangladesh 2008: Confrontation, Competition, Accountability*. Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University, Dhaka, August 2009, pp. 6, 11-32.

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 2, Economic Growth and Corruption Free Good Governance, in "Outline Perspective Plan of Bangladesh - 2010-2021 - Making Vision 2021 A Reality," General Economics Division, Planning Commission, Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh, June 2010, page 12.

<sup>14</sup> ARD. Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices, National Survey Covering, Democracy and Governance Issues, Deliverable 10: Survey Research Report April 2004.

<sup>15</sup> MSI. *Final Report, Support for Development of the USAID/Bangladesh Anti-Corruption Strategy*, submitted to USAID on December 24, 2004.

January, which the main opposition parties had threatened to boycott. Elections were postponed for nearly two years while the Election Commission (EC) was reorganized and finally took place on 29 December 2008.

During this interim, politically charged period, corruption was a major issue. The two most recent former Presidents and other key political figures from the principal parties were arrested and briefly detained. The ACC was strengthened and made more independent. Bangladesh adhered to UNCAC. Many innovative measures were adopted to address corruption and the use of public office for personal gain.<sup>16</sup> Many cases were initiated by an Anti-Corruption Task Force that was led by senior army officials and worked in parallel with the ACC. However, much of the effort of this non-elected government was not sustainable; some compromises were needed because a calm environment was needed for the elections. It was during this interim period that PROGATI started working. In the absence of an elected government and a parliament, some components of PROGATI could not effectively start as soon as planned. Furthermore, because the Parliament was being formed and commissions and decisions being made for the institutions of government with which PROGATI was to work, PROGATI had to bide its time in order to negotiate and implement the work plan with regard to the Parliament.

The new Awami League (AL) government, headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was seated in January 2009. Although PROGATI had been established for over a year, it took more time to engage the newly installed government, familiarize it with PROGATI and its objectives, and to reach an agreement of cooperation. The Timeline for PROGATI Design, presented at Annex 5 summarizes these events as the context for developing what became the PROGATI program.

## **B. The Response by USAID**

After a systematic review<sup>17</sup> of past and planned international programs with a focus on transparency, accountability, and other aspects of corruption and financial management, USAID issued a task order under the Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance (BRDG) Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). That task order was awarded on September 19, 2007 to Development Alternatives International (DAI), associated with the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) “to promote principles of accountability and responsiveness to decrease the level of corruption in Bangladesh.”<sup>18</sup> This four-year program (PROGATI) had the following specific objectives:

1. Strengthen a parliamentary budget analysis unit;
2. Provide technical assistance to support a civil society anti-corruption coalition, public-private partnerships, and citizen advocacy and watchdog initiatives;
3. Increase citizen group participation in developing program-based budgets for enhanced oversight of government budgets;
4. Support the mass media to build its capacity as a public watchdog through the establishment of a Center for Investigative Journalism; and
5. Support parliamentary oversight committees and parliamentary accountability reforms.

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<sup>16</sup> Blair, Harry, 2010, “Party overinstitutionalization, contestation, and democratic degradation in Bangladesh,” in Paul R. Brass, ed., *Handbook of South Asian Politics: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal* (London: Routledge, 2010), 98-117.

<sup>17</sup> Activity Design Document for Anti-Corruption (AC), *Combating Corruption: Promoting Good Governance, Transparency and Integrity*, USAID/Bangladesh (undated) pp. 2-4.

<sup>18</sup> USAID, Office for Democracy and Governance, Task Order, Contract DFD-1-00-05-00220-00, Dhaka, Bangladesh, September - October 2007.

The task order summarized the response as follows:

“The achievement of these objectives requires a two-pronged approach, which entails (1) strengthening public institutions, including civil servants and elected officials, to better carry out their oversight functions, as well as (2) strengthening civil society organizations, including media, to generate demand for increased oversight.”<sup>19</sup>

### C. DAI’s Response to the Task Order

In its proposal for PROGATI implementation, DAI articulated a concise objective: to promote principles of accountability, transparency, and responsiveness as a means to decrease the level of corruption.<sup>20</sup> DAI also responded with a two-focus strategy that paraphrased the summary of the task order by noting that “Bangladesh also suffers from a crisis of fragmented social capital that cuts through virtually all institutions—civil service, the judiciary, education, business, media and even civil society.”<sup>21</sup> DAI proposed to develop cross-cutting relationships, build trust between institutions, and to build more purposeful efforts. DAI went on to propose a series of instances where opposing and distrustful institutions could meet to discuss and develop a consensus for action. All of these concepts (linkage, increased capabilities and demand, discussion and debate) are the major dimensions of the social capital concept.<sup>22</sup>

PROGATI’s initial work plan<sup>23</sup> built upon those dimensions with three principles:

“First, bring together a critical mass of leaders and managers from all sides to design and guide reform process.

“Second, actively link and build relationships built on trust and confidence between civil society media, and government.

“Third, pursue opportunities that keep these groups in sustainable creative interaction.”

This approach of developing cross-cutting relationships became the methodology applied systematically throughout the first three years to develop the work plan, build relations with government and non-governmental institutions, and the establish the Advisory Group. This approach is described in detail in the section on management as one of PROGATI’s “best practices.”

PROGATI was envisioned as a four component program<sup>24</sup> with three international partners. In addition to DAI, responsibility was shared by AED and IREX. AED provided staff and short-term technical assistance (STTA) for the civil society component. IREX did the same for the media component. Program leadership was the responsibility of DAI.

Thus, PROGATI was structured into four components:

1. Strengthening media to serve as an effective public watchdog;
2. Strengthening civil society to support and promote anticorruption reforms;
3. Strengthening public institutions oversight capacity; and
4. Strengthening Parliament’s oversight capacity.

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<sup>19</sup> USAID/Bangladesh Contract Number: DFD-I-04-05-00220-00, September 19, 2007, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> PROGATI Workplan – Year one October 2007 to September 2008, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> PROGATI Workplan – Year one October 2007 to September 2008, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Merschrod, Kris 2008, *A Sociology: the dynamics of collectivities and their application to social change and development*. Ithaca, NY. Also Thompson, G. et al, “Structural Social Capital,” forthcoming.

<sup>23</sup> PROGATI Workplan – Year one October 2007 to September 2008, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> The fifth component “Windows of Opportunity” a grant-making component became the local government component when local government associations were funded by PROGATI.

PROGATI's response was timely yet dependent on the political events described above. For example, in anticipation of elections in 2008, PROGATI proposed to use the period preceding the election of a new parliament by the interim government to initiate a first phase of the program to be implemented in three concurrent steps. The "concurrent" aspect is important because as new opportunities were identified the engagement of that opportunity required: 1) preparation: contacts, research, analysis; 2) leadership strengthening and capacity building: potential advisors and champions of the PROGATI objective as a platform for; 3) institutional development and project implementation.<sup>25</sup>

For M&E, DAI proposed the use of their Technical and Administrative Management Information System (TAMIS) software to track inputs and outputs in conjunction with the performance monitoring plan (PMP) that would be developed as part of the first year work plan. Data from TAMIS was used to assess the cost effectiveness and also the gender balance of the training programs (cf. Tables 1 and 2). A series of baseline surveys were proposed to measure the impact of PROGATI activities. The evaluation section (Annex 10) on the Performance Management System explains how some of the proposed impacts at the results-level were beyond the planned four-year timeframe. The evaluation team believes that the output monitoring proposed by DAI was an appropriate response to the task order.

#### **D. Previous USAID Programs Directly Related to the Development Challenge**

"Effective and responsive democratic institutions and practices" have been a constant USAID strategic objective in Bangladesh and elsewhere. Between June 2001 and December 2005, USAID/Bangladesh sponsored the National Constituency for Strong Local Government (NCSLG) program. That program principally addressed policy reform advocacy, information dissemination and networking among elected local government officials, and it also addressed transparency and accountability. Among its principal achievements were the establishment of the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) and the Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF), as advocacy organizations for local governments nationwide.<sup>26</sup> They eventually became partners and extended coverage for PROGATI.

NCSLG was succeeded by the Democratic Local Governance Program (DLGP), awarded to Research Triangle Institute International (RTII). DLGP was active from September 2005 until September 2008; it provided continued support to MAB and BUPF and added emphasis on local government service delivery, with heightened emphasis on transparency and accountability.<sup>27</sup> When DLGP concluded, PROGATI picked up part of this program under its Windows of Opportunity component, and used it, in coordination with its civil society component to further citizen awareness and direct participation in national Budget analysis, social audits, citizen scorecards, and other interventions at the *union parishad* (UP), *upazila* and district levels through MAB and BUPF.

Also, between December 2004 and December 2009, USAID/Bangladesh sponsored the "Five Estates of Democracy Initiative" under a cooperative agreement with the International Republican Institute (IRI). That program addressed governance issues in a cross-sectoral effort with private industry, labor, civil society, the media, and the political parties.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, the US Embassy had supported the creation of the International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB) that also received PROGATI support.

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with Deputy Chief of Party March 2011.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.ardinc.com/ard/us/projects/bangladesh-national-constituency-for-strong-local-government.html>.

<sup>27</sup> RTI International, September 30, 2008, *Democratic Local Governance Program in Bangladesh: Final Report*. Research Triangle Park, NC.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.iri.org/news-events-press-center/news/iri-asia-deputy-director-testifies-upcoming-elections-bangladesh>.

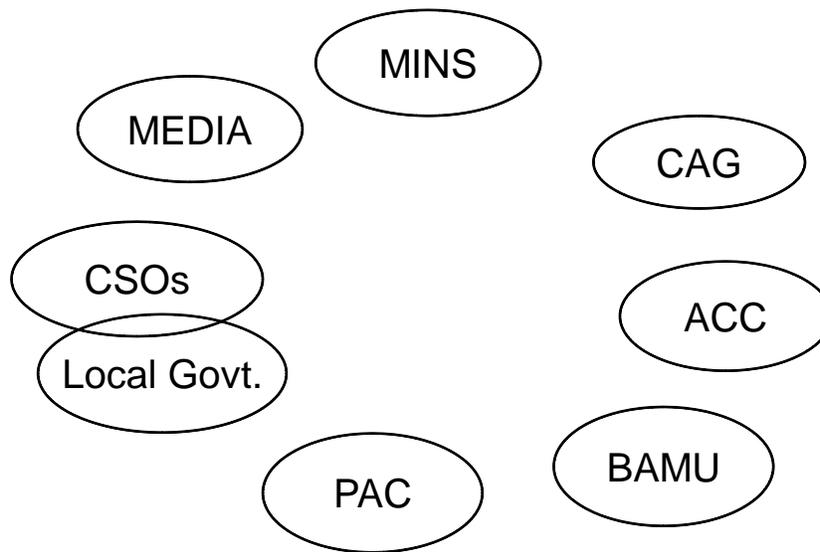
## V. FINDINGS

### A. Achievement of the Principal Objectives

An evaluation of PROGATI's achievement toward the principal objectives requires both an item-by-item review and a more holistic perspective with an eye to the society-wide goal of reducing corruption. We shall begin with the holistic view and then discuss specific PROGATI achievements by principal objectives.

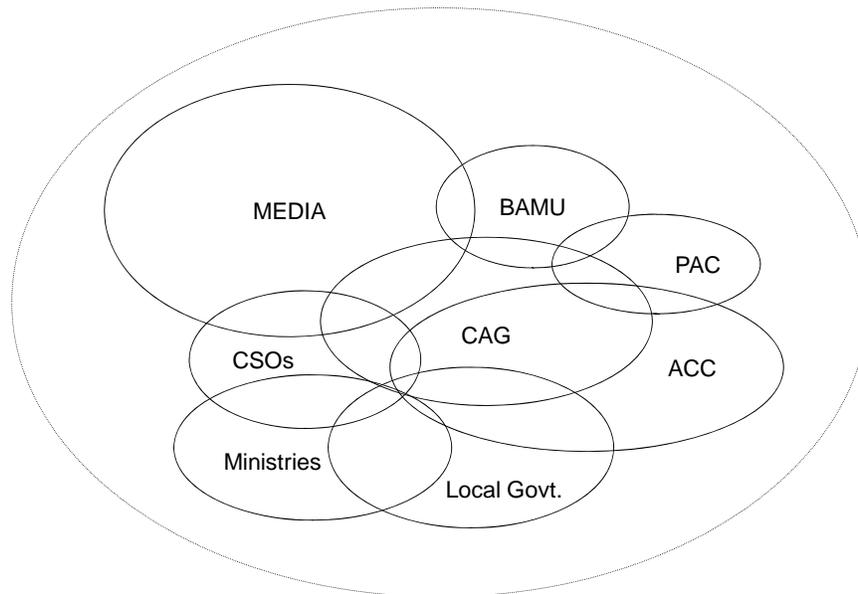
The holistic perspective begins with what we described in section III, The Development Challenge, as "fragmented social capital." Figure 1 illustrates the state of fragmentation among governmental and non-governmental entities when the program began (the lack of linkages between key entities).

**Figure 1: Key Entities at Beginning of Program**



PROGATI then began to apply the three above-described elements of its work plan to engage those entities by: 1) bringing together a critical mass of leaders and managers from all sides to design and guide the reform process; 2) linking and building relationships on trust between civil society, media and government; and 3) pursuing opportunities that keep these groups in a sustainable creative interaction. The result is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: A Context of Accountability, Transparency, Integrity**



The process began with STTA to assess and establish connections with the Parliament Secretariat (PS) and with the media; by reviewing potential hosts for the new organization that became the Journalism Training and Research Institute (JATRI) and selecting trainers for the media. PROGATI also identified and brought together the first of its local partners—the PS, Democracywatch (DW), Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), and BRAC University’s IGS—for a discussion on the nature of the program and its first annual work plan. These meetings continued through each quarter and for semi-annual work plans.

PROGATI facilitated a neutral table around which leaders and managers from diverse sectors could discuss issues such as the development of PROGATI’s program and the objective of increasing transparency and accountability. This dynamic of bringing key players together, discussing, and deciding in a facilitated environment was repeated throughout the duration of the program for a progressively larger circle of institutions. An important example of this linkage building, and one of the best practices of the management structure, was the seconding to PROGATI of professionals from stakeholder entities. These seconded personnel worked within the program as the component managers for the media, civil society, public institutions, and the Parliament. Another important example of this linkage building will be described as one of the best practices of the management structure: having professionals seconded to PROGATI as the component managers for public institutions (ER3) and the Parliament (ER4). In the case of ER1 the component manager came from the media itself, in ER3 from CAG and, in the last, from the Finance Ministry.<sup>29</sup>

“This planning meeting was the first time that I had actually sat at a table with Government officials as a partner.”

Taleya Rehman  
Exec. Dir. Democracywatch

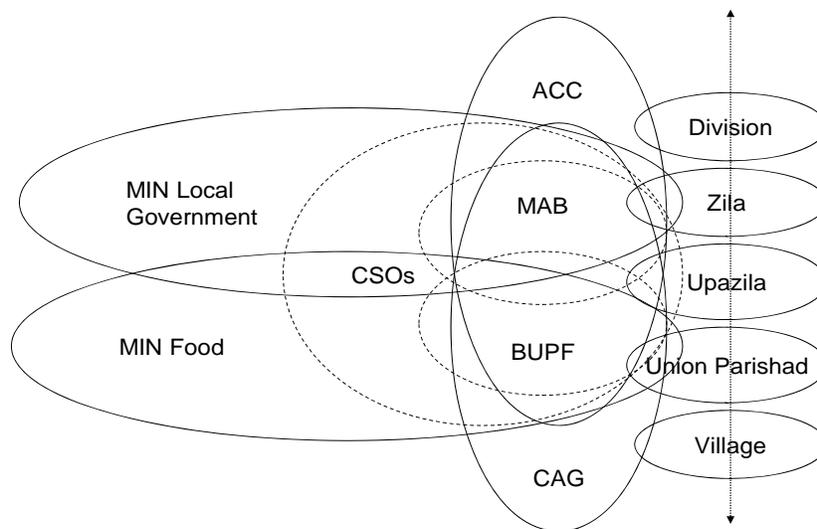
In the case of the Parliament’s Budget Analysis and Monitoring Unit (BAMU), members are seconded from their respective departments to staff this new unit. BEI, which provides technical assistance to CAG, incorporated the former Auditor General, Asif Ali, after his retirement; other key staff members came together before retiring and working to form the BEI. This technique of seconding experienced

<sup>29</sup> The first ER4 manager was not from the Ministry of Finance; however, his replacement was from the Ministry.

professionals provided personal linkages with direct knowledge of the institutions, many of whom will return to those institutions. As many of those professionals noted during interviews, because of their experience in PROGATI their professional skills and outlook have changed forever. They are bringing back to their home institutions new expectations and perspectives focused on how to improve transparency and accountability in their agencies. Moreover, they feel the legitimacy of being part of a movement; they are not alone.

Another perspective of the result of these principles and practices is illustrated (Figure 3) in relation to the networks associated with the ministries, all levels of local governance, the municipal and UP associations, and civil society, including national and women’s business associations. Using the same principles and techniques PROGATI component managers brought together all of these levels of governance with the same focus on accountability and citizen participation in local priorities and oversight.

**Figure 3: Levels of Government and Accountability for Services**



In summary, at the holistic level, PROGATI achieved results that were not in the PMP, and for which indicators had not been designed. Nevertheless, by the linkage and engagement strategy around a neutral table, PROGATI created an environment that may become a sustainable context for reducing corruption in the years to come.

**B. Achievement of Specific Objectives**

In summarizing our findings for the four specific principal objectives we have chosen not to describe the efforts by component because that could detract from the context of the cross-cutting and multi-linked holistic perspective above. Annex 8, Documentation of Organizations by Specific Objective, provides greater detail.

**1. Relevance of PROGATI to the USAID Mission and Bangladesh’s Context**

Under the USAID/Bangladesh Strategic Objective 11, “More Effective Democratic Institutions and Practices,” Component 1 was “Anti-Corruption Reforms.” The PROGATI purpose, “promoting the principles of accountability, transparency and responsiveness” in the institutions and process of

governance, was directly relevant at the outset to USAID's democracy and governance (DG) strategic objective. That relevance continues to the present time.

Under the USAID/Bangladesh Strategic Objective 11, "More Effective Democratic Institutions and Practices," Component 1 was "Anti-Corruption Reforms." The PROGATI purpose—"promoting the principles of accountability, transparency and responsiveness" in the institutions and process of governance—has been directly relevant at the conceptual level to USAID's DG strategic objective; moreover, it responded to needs identified by the transition GOB.

The program was timely during the political transition in Bangladesh when local interest was high. A later start-up would have meant less time waiting for GOB decisions on staffing and approvals, but precise estimates of when action would be needed were not possible. The PROGATI team used the time to assess the options, make contacts and prepare for the openings such as the establishment of operation of BAMU, the reactivated ACC and CAG, and the Right to Information Act (RTI). By working with these institutions and initiatives as they became functional, they provided examples and openings with the others.

Although direct support to GOB public entities was delayed substantially because of the interim character of that Government, the dialogue that did take place, particularly with the PS, facilitated access to the new government officials and members of parliament once they were in place.

At the applied level, PROGATI proposed very specific activities, beginning with surveys, STTA assessments, and hiring of staff that allowed them to identify the needs of the GOB partner institutions. The relevance of activities was assured by PROGATI's participatory annual work plans and Advisory and Management groups.

The relevance to grass roots citizens of engaging their Government on issues of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness was revealed during PROGATI implementation, and supported by skilled NGOs with track records of working with both civil society and local governments in their geographical areas. The evaluation team obtained numerous expressions of satisfaction from members of civil society with the way PROGATI opened up new perspectives on their rights and options vis-à-vis budgets and service delivery. Women, in particular, responded well to the PROGATI initiative for engaging their national and local government representatives on matters of day-to-day concern for them.<sup>30</sup> Some only became aware of the roles of the CAG and the ACC as a result of PROGATI-sponsored interventions through the NGOs and civil society networks.

The methodology of bringing together potential partners from organizations that may have been at odds to discuss plans and exchange ideas in a facilitated environment was appropriate to the highly politicized and conflictive period of time before and after the elections. That facilitation around a neutral table was relevant to the context. The technique was ideal for establishing linkages between disparate governance and civil society organizations and leaders. These practical exercises built the needed trust. In brief, PROGATI's purpose, activities, methodology and managerial style were relevant to the Mission goal, the needs of the GOB and the people at all levels of governance at a unique time in Bangladesh's political history.

## **2. Management and Administration**

This section summarizes the assessment of the management and the administration of PROGATI and USAID's oversight of the program. Annex 9, Narrative of Managerial and Administrative Development, supports this summary and Section VI.C addresses the best practices used by management to achieve the results described above.

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mahmuda Begum Shelly, Secretary General of Doorbar Network, 19 February 2011.

In early 2011, when this evaluation was conducted, the relationship between the management team and its partners was excellent. In the first semester of the fourth year, some partners engaged in training had been impatient because of training delays pending USAID approval of the current workplan. However, in general, the management team and partners have become a well coordinated network. The engagement of partners such as Rupantar, DW, the Khan Foundation (KF), Unnayan Shamannay, BEI, Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI), and IGS, expanded the managerial reach and also provided the networking that has been successful in building trust across sectors and within government. The incorporation of the established networks, Steps Toward Development (STW) and Doorbar Network, as direct local implementation partners expanded the strong gender focus and the geographic coverage of the program.

The principal management constraint was timing. Long delays were encountered in getting a government in place with which to work, in obtaining approvals, and in negotiating the nature of PROGATI collaboration with the wide range of institutional partners. This meant a late start for major components of the program. We should learn from this experience that a complex and sensitive program requires time to get all of the pieces in place and needs to be sufficiently flexible to adapt to unanticipated and uncontrollable circumstances.

### 3. Cost Effectiveness

The SOW posits three questions related to cost effectiveness and efficiency. The findings below are based on the best available evidence using: USAID practices, actual costs in time and money, results obtained, and the best sense of impact that we can document and explain.

#### **Are results achieved under PROGATI being produced at an acceptable cost compared to alternative approaches accomplishing the same objectives?**

The operative word here is “results.” PROGATI was awarded to DAI at the end of FY 2007. For a program of this complexity in a country the size of Bangladesh, the initial budget of \$18,185,876 seems reasonable. Of that amount, by the end of FY 2010, \$15,840,868 had been obligated and \$11,018,664 spent. Given the current burn rate, it is likely that total program expenditures by the end of FY 2011 will be less than the obligated amount. In this regard, PROGATI avoided devoting a large budget to expatriate staff. PROGATI never had more than two long-term expatriates in country and the expatriate STTA responded to perceived needs with Mission approval and support.

As described in the first section of these findings, the four Expected Results (ER), with a total of 14 sub-results,<sup>31</sup> were largely achieved. Annex 8 describes the specific achievements—BAMU, Public Institutions, local government bodies, the business community, citizen participation in the budgetary process, and JATRI and mass media. Regarding impact, as explained in Annex 10 Performance Measurement Systems, the evaluators do not consider the results indicators to be reliable or useful. The measurement of the long-term impacts of PROGATI interventions will not be evident for several years. The original PMP set targets for 97 process indicators<sup>32</sup> and this original set of indicators was increased to 109.<sup>33</sup> Although most of these targets suffered substantial delays, they were eventually met by the end of the third year; a number of actions substantially exceeded the targets. The specifics of these findings are presented in Annex 10 and also in Figures 1 and 2.

Anecdotal Result:

“Citizens are now not afraid to talk and challenge officials.”

Rafiqi Islam Khokan  
Director, Rupantar

<sup>31</sup> Contract Number: DFD-I-04-05-00220-00, pp. 5-9.

<sup>32</sup> Performance Monitoring Plan, PROGATI, 22 September 2008, Dhaka.

<sup>33</sup> Addendum, Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP), 25 March 2010.

Training and campaigns were the main vehicles for increasing the capacity of individuals and organizations to improve transparency and accountability. The PROGATI indicator summary tables<sup>34</sup> of the 2008 PMP, its addendum in 2010, and the second semester report for 2010<sup>35</sup> show that PROGATI and its partners substantially exceeded their training targets.

**Table 1: Training Planned and Accomplished Through September 2010**

<b>PROGATI Indicator</b>	<b>2008 PMP</b>	<b>2010 PMP</b>	<b>Actual 9/30/2010</b>
Government officials anti-corruption training	254	332	386
NGO staff trained	1,104	1,545	2,194
CSO advocacy campaigns	288	477	478
Persons participating in CSO advocacy campaigns	n/a	95,450	130,206
CSOs engaging in advocacy and watchdog	182	284	517
Number of Government media staff trained	30	343	394
Journalists trained	665	1,330	1,439
Number of media CSOs assisted	8	15	13
Non-State news outlets assisted	n/a	174	225

**To what extent is PROGATI appropriately taking advantage of cost share and/or leverage opportunities?**

Since PROGATI was a contract, not a grant, cost-sharing only applied to the host country grantees. By all accounts it was highly effective and closely related to the leveraging obtained from the extensive use of Bangladeshi NGO and network partners, effective use of sub-contracts with Bangladeshi organizations like BEI, MRDI, and Unnayan Shamannay, and from the careful, although lengthy, negotiations with the GOB partners to define common objectives and the nature of program interventions.

“PROGATI has the advantage (over the UNDP) of working with the CSOs because they bring about change from outside.”  
Deputy Director  
UNDP

**What, if any, alternative approaches exist which could achieve results at greater efficiency, and what mechanisms can be recommended for implementing the alternative approaches?**

The evaluators are convinced that for such a complex program as PROGATI, a contract, as opposed to a cooperative agreement or grant, is needed in order to ensure USAID management control. Whether a full competition for a contract open to any bidder is used or an IQC task order similar to the one used for PROGATI, would depend on timing and the urgency for starting a new program. We do believe that any significant time lost in contracting delays for a follow-on program could diminish the sustainability and, hence, the overall cost-effectiveness.

**4. Impact**

The focus of this evaluation is on assessment of performance rather than impact per se. In accordance with the Statement of Work, the evaluation team has sought to identify the impacts of PROGATI to the extent feasible. However, PROGATI was neither designed nor implemented so as to meet the rigorous standards of the recently approved USAID evaluation policy. As that policy notes, “impact evaluations are based on models of cause and effect” and in essence can control for extraneous variable that might

<sup>34</sup> Performance Monitoring Plan, Table 1. USAID PROGRATI Indicator Correspondence Chart.

<sup>35</sup> PROGATI 2010. Semi-Annual Report 1 April 2010 to 20 September 2010, Tables.

account for change other than the actual program intervention.<sup>36</sup> Within the context of USAID policy, the present evaluation is in the nature of a performance evaluation—descriptive in nature and focused on how the program was implemented and how it was valued by the intended beneficiaries. The evaluation examines program design, management, and what results are observable. In short, a performance evaluation, while assessing impact as best it can, necessarily lacks the experimental rigor of an impact evaluation.

The progress in achieving the principal objectives has been discussed in Section V.A. above. This section draws on that discussion and links to other sections in order to provide an assessment on the impacts emerging from the program. We caution that it is still too early to make any definitive formal measurements. The following subsections highlight some of the areas of potential impact of the PROGATI program.

### **Improved Public Institutions with Positive Attitude toward Accountability and Transparency**

PROGATI is working with important public institutions tasked with curbing corruption by establishing greater accountability and transparency of public expenditure management: the CAG, the ACC, the Parliament’s Public Accounts Commission (PAC), and the ministries. PROGATI has brought about palpable positive changes in all of these institutions. The changes in the CAG reflect a positive impact emerging in terms of opening up of this traditionally “behind-the-scenes” institution and providing it with enhanced capacity and tools, such as manuals and guidelines. These materials and the trained people can be used for a long time beyond the project period. However, challenges to making these CAG Office impacts sustainable. In particular, enactment of the still pending Audit Act will further enhance and sustain PROGATI’s impact on the CAG office.<sup>37</sup> Among other things, the Audit Act would position PAC as an oversight body for public expenditure outside the Executive Branch.

<p>“PROGATI has trained our staff for quality report writing - templates. We are not known to the public, but now we can go to the media with skill.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Murshidul Hug Khan CAG</p>
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We did not find evidence of significant impact of PROGATI on ACC, although some results were achieved initially with the ACC being receptive to PROGATI messages and willingness to engage in workshops and exchanges. With the ministries, there has been some progress toward institutionalization and capacity building on anti-corruption, but changes in key positions make it difficult to consolidate sustainable impact. The strengthening of internal audit cells in two ministries, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MFDM)<sup>38</sup> and Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRDC), and the training of the officials there have created some impact that may become sustainable because the trained officials are the professional staff, rather than high-level political officials who change frequently.

### **Stronger Institutional Capacity to Fight Corruption with the Legacy Institutions**

In different ways, both JATRI and BAMU are emerging as independent institutions. Although both are precarious, they have a potential for sustainability and thus to become significant contributors to accountability and transparency.

<sup>36</sup> USAID Evaluation Policy, Bureau for Policy Planning and Learning, January 2011, page 4, [http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation/USAID\\_EVALUATION\\_POLICY.pdf?020911](http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation/USAID_EVALUATION_POLICY.pdf?020911).

<sup>37</sup> CAG’s recent inauguration of its Media Cell should enhance this effort as well as improve its transparency of this organization. The CAG code of ethics, advised by PROGATI, is being promoted throughout the entire staff.

<sup>38</sup> MFDM was described by PROGATI as a strong partner in its work with social audits. Without that partnership, PROGATI would not have been able to do the extensive social audit work with the networks.

BAMU is emerging as a unit with the capacity for undertaking the analysis of public expenditures in the budget from within the Parliament. The office space and the staffing provided by the PS will help it become more sustainable, and it has already generated demand among the MPs for its services. However, BAMU's ultimate impact will be subject to Parliament's formalization and its ownership of it after PROGATI concludes, and especially after the next Parliament is seated.

"We have benefited as individuals. These are career role skills for the ministry."  
BAMU Analyst

Of a completely different nature and a more complex organizational chore, JATRI appears to be emerging as an effective institution for journalism research and training. This perceived effectiveness may or may not become a program impact, depending largely on how it is handled by its host, the IGS under the direction of the University Council that governs BRAC University. The complexity is in the multi-tiered structure of JATRI being part of IGS, and IGS being under the University Council. This implies that key actors include BRAC University Vice Chancellor and the Director of BRAC's IGS. Indeed, PROGATI has been interacting with all of these important players from the beginning. From these layers come two, not mutually exclusive, options for JATRI's sustainability: 1) as a training center for the media industry supported by the media paying to train their professionals and 2) as a journalism department under the University from which tuition and University funding will support JATRI. Once support from PROGATI ends, these options will have to come into play. Capacity has been built among the journalists, and a resource pool for investigative journalism on corruption issues has been created. However, the reflection of this enhanced capacity on the media, as a whole, has not been seen so far. It is still early for that reflection to become visible, but it could become ultimate impact that justifies the investment in JATRI. To date, PROGATI's impact has been on the organizational development of JATRI and its advisory board. The PROGATI team has been working with the BRAC University Council, the IGS and JATRI on a sustainability plan that will take into consideration funding strategies. We understand that PROGATI will discuss the plan with the Mission. In Section VII, Recommendations below, we provide further comments on this theme.

### **Greater Media Capacity on the Issues of Accountability and Transparency**

PROGATI has created other avenues for media impact on anti-corruption issues outside of the scope of JATRI. For example, the program used MRDI to provide media-related services and advocacy for RTI as well as training of the public relations officials in the government ministries and departments to create media cells. These initiatives will have an impact beyond the life of PROGATI. Enhanced capacity and demand for understanding of the RTI can bring about a significant sustainable impact by citizens with effective weapons for fighting corruption. Enhanced journalist capacity in audit terminology will help bring audits down to the level of understanding of the people.

"The idea is that a relationship between auditors and media will promote good governance"

Khorshed Alam Khan  
PROGATI Component  
Manager

### **Stronger Grassroots Voices on Anti-Corruption**

PROGATI has given the grassroots networks the opportunity to work specifically on anti-corruption issues, helping to create a demand for accountability and transparency at the local level. PROGATI introduced clear guidelines on anti-corruption campaigns, budget oversight hearings, citizen monitoring exercises; and social audits as tools, and have been mainstreamed in many grassroots networks working as PROGATI partners. These organizations have the opportunity to look into their own governance issues and respond positively to enhance them within their own operational frameworks. For example, the Doorbar Network incorporated transparency and accountability into their constitution.

The sustainability of PROGATI impact at the grassroots level will be subject to the engagement of local governments in their efforts. PROGATI has linked to local government through its civil society work and

its partnerships with BUPF and MAB. BUPF members and MAB member municipalities are beginning to mainstream anti-corruption messages and practices through these local governments with complementary civil society oversight and grassroots pressure.

### **Greater Integration among Stakeholders**

PROGATI has worked across multiple stakeholder levels for addressing accountability and transparency in a comprehensive manner. This effort has increased integration among the stakeholders around a common anti-corruption agenda. Such greater integration and stronger linkages constitute one of the major achievements of the program and lead toward one of the most significant potentially sustainable PROGATI impacts. This integration has been greater within the stakeholders of the same component and less evident across the components.

### **5. Sustainability**

Early in DAI's exposition of the challenges ahead, the idea of "incentives and externalities" was used to frame a discussion on the research needed to determine what would be needed "to obtain buy-in from key leaders in government and business circles, and from well-respected civil society leaders."<sup>39</sup> DAI's strategy was to seek the support and commitment of these leaders and "with their support and commitment, PROGATI will be able to tap into their experience and networks, and determine low-cost, high-return approaches to changing incentive structures and thereby spark social change."<sup>40</sup>

From the interviews conducted with key program leaders and staff, it is clear that PROGATI went about involving them in discussions, forums, workshops, and training in an astute manner. PROGATI's approach treated them as professionals. It 1) avoided exposing them to career costs and 2) involved them in consensus building to create a context where doing due diligence and accountability is accepted and respected behavior. In contrast with the highly personalized and targeted approach to corruption during the interim government, PROGATI's approach was depersonalized and more focused on systems and processes of analysis. Of course, there are continuing counter pressures, e.g., the current debate on legislation to constrain the independence of the ACC.

### **A Gentle Movement**

The result has been less a dramatic spark for social change than a gentle but steadily growing readiness for change both in government and in civil society. For example, with the Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI) hotline in Khulna, when a woman finds that she has been asked for payment for business transactions and calls the hotline, then a group of knowledgeable women accompany her to confront the corrupt official. When a committee in a UP does a social audit or oversees a service program that has signs of improper delivery, they, as a group, confront the official. The people in these efforts feel that they have "moral authority," and they push back knowing their rights. The officials know too that there is a chain of appeal above them, and that their actions will be made public.

"We chose Khulna for the pilot hotline because there is where the highest corruption was found., but we would like to expand to all Divisions."

Selima Ahmad  
President of BWCCI

There is reason to be optimistic that starting this movement and creating a context for transparency and the right to information, plus training for media exchanges between the press and the government agencies, has been a factor in the changing belief structure of the public. The proof of the emerging

<sup>39</sup> PROGATI- Workplan Year One October 2007 to September 2008, Development Alternatives, Inc. Dhaka, Bangladesh p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

change in the belief and action structure was being gathered from two levels of participants<sup>41</sup> at the time of this evaluation, so the evidence is not in, but it will be analyzed for the next semester report.

At all levels and sectors, interviewees expressed a commitment to making their reports and work publicly available (BAMU, CAG, ACC) so that citizens and business when dealing with agencies would be better able to resist corruption and provide oversight. It is impossible to estimate the sustainability of this awareness and commitment. However, it seems evident that this trend has built upon awareness efforts that began during the interim government, and that then PROGATI helped to foster the mechanisms, abilities and the capability for citizens to raise their voices and apply pressure.

The sustainability of the strengthened entities (ACC, CAG, BAMU, and the PAC) will depend upon the budgetary priorities and the services that MPs perceive that they receive from them. But for the most part, the movement and skills are within the people at all levels of business, government and citizenry.

In the management section we described the importance of seconding. The return of the seconded personnel to their ministries, even the BAMU personnel if that unit were to be abandoned, will be an incentive for continuing the changes and will help sustain the movement and its application.

All of these perspectives bode well for a sustainable movement.

### **A Need for Greater Coverage**

Without a doubt, there is a great deal more that can be done, both in geographical coverage and in depth of reach at all levels of governance. Some of the more difficult areas, such as legislative support and the separation of powers between the branches of government, will take years of continued work for change from within and international support.

The most precarious of the organizations are BUPF, MAB JATRI and IBFB. They all depend upon USAID funds. If these entities are included in the new USAID/Bangladesh Strengthening Democratic Local Governments (SDLG) program, and if that program continues to apply PROGATI training in accountability and transparency, that would help support the movement. In the case of BWCCI, although USAID funding is a key to their work with the hot line, they have adequate funding from other international partners to sustain themselves. This organization began as a felt-need of women in business that put up the first funds and organizational effort. Their space is modest, as is their dues structure. In contrast the IBFB, started as a spin-off of the Federation of the Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), has very low dues and high rent. Their sustainability plan involves an endowment in the form of a substantial building from the USG and by renting space in it they can pay their staff and overhead.

As described above, JATRI's sustainability will depend upon two factors: 1) BRAC University's continued interest in either or both options, i.e., its development as a training institute for fees and/or a potential academic department supported by tuition, hence its commitment in funding, and 2) the advisory board's guidance and linkages to the commercial media willing to pay for sending journalists for courses. It is too early in JATRI's development to estimate how the enthusiasm will be converted into financial stability. As recommended later in this report, USAID presence in the deliberations and discussions would also increase the probability of JATRI becoming a sustainable institution.

For the CSOs and grassroots networks, one element of sustainability was evident in our interviews. The work of these organizations in anti-corruption advocacy helps them look into their own practices of accountability and transparency. Although they do not have much control over the social change, they

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<sup>41</sup> BUPF participants at the Union Parishad level in, "Transparency and Accountability in *Union parishad* Resource Management" and CAG participants in, "Documenting Cases of Fraud and Corruption" for national and field staff levels of audits.

can control their own practices, and that has happened in the community of civil society organizations (CSOs). The issues of accountability and transparency have been mainstreamed in the operational practices of these organizations as they have developed greater understanding of these issues. Thus, as PROGATI ends, these organizations will still maintain the practices of accountability and transparency for their own sake since they have seen the benefits of these practices.

In the interviews with DW and Unnayan Shammanay, their leadership said that now there is an intellectual movement in the country that meshes well with the PROGATI objective of increasing transparency and participation in the field of local level budgeting and oversight.

The CAG is constitutionally mandated. Moreover, it has a presence throughout Bangladesh on the district level. One potential threat to its sustainability is political. If GOB authorities, including MPs, feel threatened by CAG interventions, then financial resources for its continued program may be at risk. Moreover, the leadership of the current CAG (and of his predecessor) for opening up to other sectors of Bangladesh society, including civil society and the press, have given this institution impetus that could possibly disappear or diminish once the individuals providing that leadership are replaced. The same situation also applies to the PAC.

Critical to the sustainability of all of the PROGATI institutions will be continued political pressure from civil society, local governments, and the press. This pressure has created a movement that is lively while it has the support of PROGATI resources, but which may be threatened if abandoned, post-PROGATI. The evaluators believe that there remains a need for leadership from some source to further and sustain the integrated, cross-sector approach that gained strength and vigor during PROGATI's lifetime.

Regarding PROGATI's support to the Parliament through the BAMU, we are heartened to learn of the recently initiated Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices (PRODIP) program, which has a major component of support to the Parliament. Attention by this new program to the BAMU and to the PAC could help consolidate their activities and render PROGATI interventions more sustainable. The PRODIP Chief of Party expressed awareness of the importance of PROGATI's work with BAMU and the PAC and interest in working with them.<sup>42</sup>

Local government strengthening was picked up by PROGATI under its Windows of Opportunity component, following the conclusion of the DLGP in December 2008. Meanwhile the Improving Local Governance by Strengthening *union parishads* and Creating Citizen Awareness (ILLG) program, led by Rupantar Foundation and working with upazila and district-level (zila) municipalities continues active through March 2011. Thus, there should be some continuity there, although we have not seen the focus on social audits, citizen scorecards, participatory budgeting, budget analysis, and training in fiscal responsibility and accountability that have been important PROGATI contributions.

### **Sustainability and the New USAID SDLG Program**

The leaders of both the BUPF and the MAB have expressed their satisfaction with PROGATI support and also their concern about future support option. The new USAID/Bangladesh SDLG program could provide useful follow-on support to them and help them on their road to sustainability. We note with satisfaction that the strengthening of these institutions figures prominently in the SDLG SOW. That SOW includes laudable efforts at local government organizational and institutional strengthening, but it does not express an anticorruption focus as a part of its overall purpose, apart from a reference to "transparency and accountability in the management of public resources at the local level." Among SDLG program indicators, the fifth refers to "fiscal management" skills, among the expected training results (p. 23), which

"Future local elections will be enhanced by the code of ethics for officials and the training in social monitoring will help."

Nanda Sutradhar  
Local Government Manager,  
PROGATI

<sup>42</sup> Interview in Dhaka, 17 February 2011.

presumably implies safeguards against corruption.

Finally, the SOW for SDLG, in the section on “Synergy with Other USAID and Donor-Funded Programs” (p. 8), states: “USAID/Bangladesh expects that SDLG will collaborate with PROGATI in a more comprehensive manner than previously to strengthen oversight mechanisms at the local level, such as grassroots NGO networks, that seek to raise awareness about anti-corruption and the role of local governments and citizens in the management of local resources.”

We hope the new SDLG program will take this expectation seriously and help consolidate the progress to date from PROGATI interventions with civil society, NGO networks, the *union parishads* and *upazilas*, and also with the district-level instances of the ACC and the CAG. If so, that program will go a long way toward attaining sustainability of the efforts initiated by PROGATI.

## 6. Cross-Cutting Issues

The Scope of Work for the evaluation poses two questions to be addressed on cross-cutting issues:

1. How well has PROGATI integrated support to gender, the disabled, and minorities?
2. What improvements have been made to increase program effectiveness in integrating these issues?

The main cross-cutting theme of PROGATI was training and awareness to support accountability and transparency at the institutional level and vigilance at the individual level. PROGATI was systematic when including women and women’s issues in the program. This began with the selection of professionals and staff in the main office and continued in all of the local training. Women village officials were part of the local vigilance training, e.g., the use of community scorecards and to monitor ministry programs. A strong outreach and apprenticeship program for journalists was especially aimed at women; and in the business sector the inclusion of the BWCCI, their study of corruption and the establishment of the corruption hot-line were substantial efforts for inclusion.

“Now each Ministry should explain how policy and the budget will impact on women’s issues. In BAMU two of the economists are women.”

Group Discussion  
BAMU

Table 2, however, shows that although PROGATI focused programmatically on activities that responded to women’s needs, it was, in its training program, with one exception, unsuccessful in achieving gender balance. In the case of NGO personnel trained, balance was achieved, but in the governance and journalist spheres less than 20 percent of the participants were women. This probably reflects the lack of gender balance in government and in the journalism profession. In the case of journalism only approximately six percent of the journalists are women.<sup>43</sup> That said, in the JATRI internship program to place trainees into media apprenticeships, women made up 40 percent of the placements and 65 percent of them were hired. That was only one group in 2010. During the observation of one group of trainees in February 2011, 50 percent of the class was made up of women. JATRI has established a fellowship program for women journalists with funding from the family of Salma Sobhan in her memory. The goal is to form “Newsnetwork” that will be a for-profit, female news agency.

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Zahid Hossain, Media Component Manager PROGATI, 8 Feb 2011.

**Table 2: Women Number and Percent in Training Through September 2010**

<b>By PROGATI Indicator</b>	<b>Male and Female</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Percent Female</b>
Government Officials anti-corruption training	386	64	17
NGO Personnel Trained	2,194	1,211	55
Number of Government Media Staff trained	394	69	18
Journalists Trained	1,439	269	19

In the selection of grassroots partners/networks, a strong focus on women networks is apparent. The Doorbar network is an exclusively women’s network that evolved out of preparations for the United Nations Conference on Women at Beijing in 1995. It has been working on the issues of violence against women for a long time, and the networks of STD are gender focused and have been working on gender issues over the years.

From what the team was able to learn, the plight of minorities was not a focus of attention for PROGATI. Here, the Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF); could have been a link to minorities. A key PROGATI partner, Doorbar Network, works with BIPF, which serves six or seven ethnic groups in 45 communities totaling between 1.5 and 2.0 million people. Some are in the North, the North East and the Chittagong Hill Tract. Many of the indigenous peoples’ complaints are similar to villagers in general as far as government services and the need to bribe in order to gain attention and to protect their villages and land from intrusion. And there are issues of governance that are specific to these ethnic communities. The land rights issues in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in particular and the irregularities involved with them could have deserved special attention from a program like PROGATI. Huge development programs have been undertaken in the Chittagong Hill Tracts since the Peace Treaty in the late 1990s, which involved public expenditure and donor funds. The monitoring of these expenditures also could have received particular attention from a point of view of accountability and transparency. And the specific minority forum of BIPF could have been the subject of a special study just as PROGATI reviewed other institutions where the methodology used by PROGATI could be applied.

Finally, more attention could have been given to physically and intellectually challenged Bangladeshis. The evaluation team has noted that many of the GOB agencies and NGO partners with which PROGATI works have offices on floors in buildings that are not accessible to the physically impaired. Training sessions could have provided special conditions favoring persons with such limitations. Apparently, neither DAI nor USAID took a hard look at some of the opportunities that might have presented themselves in this area nor sought to incorporate them into the program.

## **7. Synergy with Other USAID and Donor-Funded Programs**

Because of the perception of corruption described in the Development Challenge many donors over the last decade have focused on accountability and transparency in Bangladesh. Here we seek to reveal the thematic links of PROGATI with the other USAID and donor-funded programs. We stress the need for greater coordination among these programs for more effective and sustainable impact.

### **Synergy with USAID Programs: Bridging the Past and Future Initiatives.**

Section IV.D of this report presents an overview of the related USAID programs that preceded PROGATI, how PROGATI picked up from the earlier USAID programs that had focused on governance and the initiative with the business community. While it is encouraging that some involved in those earlier programs have become important PROGATI partners, it also appears that involving them for the sake of continuity can divert the program from its principal focus.

In our perception, organizations like BUPF, MAB, BWCCI and IBFB, all of which were partners of previous USAID initiatives, did not have as their principal focus transparency and accountability, although they have acquired some of that focus through PROGATI. These associations considered PROGATI a continuation of the previous USAID interventions, and hence were frustrated when some of the previously funded activities were not continued by PROGATI.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, these organizations have become dependent on USAID support for their survival.

By contrast, USAID sponsored two programs that operated effectively in parallel with PROGATI. The four-year \$4 million Leaders of Influence program (LOI), implemented by The Asia Foundation (TAF) has been training imams, other religious leaders, and secular community leaders in a variety of development issues, including transparency, accountability, and good governance practices. Coordination with PROGATI is facilitated by using some of the same local partners. USAID also awarded a three-year \$2 million cooperative agreement to Rupantar for a program to strengthen local government capabilities, including civil society engagement and transparency and accountability around relief efforts following around relief efforts following Cyclone Sidr.<sup>45</sup>

Two new USAID programs share some of PROGATI's focus. PRODIP, now being implemented by The Asia Foundation (TAF) will work with the Parliament and civil society. This new program ideally could help consolidate PROGATI's advances with BAMU and the PAC and also integrate some of PROGATI's approaches in its civil society work. The PRODIP Chief of Party has been coordinating its plans PROGATI;<sup>46</sup> but it is not yet clear how neatly those two programs will mesh. PRODIP will probably take up some of the activities with BAMU and PAC, but those initiatives have not yet been defined with the PS.

The SDLG program will work with local government. It is a follow-on to the USAID/Bangladesh DLGP program that ended in September 2008, when PROGATI picked up support to the BUPF and MAP. Thus, SDLG can provide continuity of support, and, hopefully, will include the emphasis on transparency and accountability that PROGATI fostered. BUPF and MAB have emerged as strong local government forums and have a countrywide outreach through the elected local government bodies.

Other current USAID/Bangladesh programs include a \$3.5 million cooperative agreement with Winrock International (September 2008–September 2012) for the Actions to Combat Trafficking in Persons program. This program works at the union parishad level, to create awareness and resistance to trafficking; thus, coordination with programs to strengthen local governance and combat corruption could be very helpful. And CARE implements the current Title II food security program, Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities (SHOUHARDO II). SHOUHARDO works with at-risk households in Bangladesh *upazilas* and *union parishads*. This program is coordinated with the Food and Disaster Relief Ministry, one of those with which PROGATI is currently working.

Finally, USAID programs in health and education could benefit from PROGATI's public sector work, especially if such Ministries as Health and Education are included.

### **Synergy with Other Donor-Funded Programs**

As mentioned above, most of the major bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors provide funding on governance issues in Bangladesh. A review of the donor-funded programs similar or related to PROGATI has been undertaken and summarized in Table 3. Although the evaluation team has collected information on most

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<sup>44</sup> The frustration was clearly evident from the discussion with MAB and IBFB in particular, who had wonderful institutional strengthening experiences of supports in the past, but with which PROGATI, in their view, could not match.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Rafiqi Islam Khokan, Rupantar's co-founder and Executive Director, Khulna, 8 February 2011.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Reginald Todd, PRODIP Chief of Party, in Dhaka, 17 February 2011.

of the related programs of the major donors, only the donor-funded programs overlapping with PROGATI's objectives are included in the table.

**Table 3: Thematic Links of PROGATI with Other Donor-Funded Programs**

Donor	Program	Thematic Link with PROGATI
UNDP	Police Reform Program (Phase II)	Component 3 (Public institutions)
	Local Governance Support Project	Windows of Opportunity
DFID	Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)	Component 2 (Civil Society)
	Strengthening Public Expenditure Management	Component 2 (Civil Society) Component 3 (Public Institutions)
	Rights and Governance Challenge Fund	Component 2 (Civil Society)
	Financial Management Reform Program (FMRP)	Component 2 (Civil Society) Component 3 (Public Institutions)
	Access to Information for Greater Participation and Accountability	Component 2 (Civil Society) Component 3 (Public Institutions)
CIDA	Strengthening Comptrollership and Oversight of Public Expenditure	Component 3 (Public Institutions)
	Parliamentary and Media Support (in partnership with the World Bank)	Component 1 (Media) Component 4 (Parliament)
DANIDA	Promoting Human Rights, Democratization and Good Governance	Component 2 (Civil Society) Component 3 (Public Institutions) Windows of Opportunity
World Bank with the UNDP pass-through modality <sup>47</sup>	Local Governance Support Project (LGSP)	Component 3 (Public Institutions) Windows of Opportunity
	Public Procurement Reform Project	Component 3 (Public Institutions)
Asian Development Bank	Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project	Component 2 (Civil Society) Windows of Opportunity
	Good Governance Program (different phases)	Component 2 (Civil Society, business) Component 3 (Public Institutions)

## 8. Client Satisfaction

This section draws mainly on findings in the previous sections regarding aspects of client satisfaction that the evaluation team has observed in the process of interacting with the clients. Our analysis, largely based on anecdotal testimony, addresses three aspects of it: awareness and enthusiasm to work on accountability; desire to continue with the work; and the working environment as perceived by the clients.

<sup>47</sup> The USG contributes to this \$190 million multi-donor program that provides block grants for infrastructure investment to all 4,498 union parishads throughout Bangladesh. This would be an ideal space for PROGATI-style social audits and community score-card interventions, perhaps through the new SDLG program.

## **Awareness and Enthusiasm**

PROGATI has been able to create significant awareness and enthusiasm among almost all the partners. The secondary clients, i.e., the enthusiasm of the beneficiary people and partner organizations is also evident.

All of the public institutions involved in the project have been sensitized and motivated to work effectively for achieving the transparency and responsibility goals. We observed the highest level of enthusiasm at the CAG Office, which has been greatly motivated to open up to, and interact with civil society and media. CAG has used their involvement with PROGATI to showcase their role in anti-corruption. There were also notable changes in the awareness and attitude in other public institutions including PAC, ACC, and the two ministries.

Enthusiasm and acknowledgement of PROGATI support in the PS is clearly high, particularly with regard to BAMU; PS staff is dedicated and enthusiastic. This conclusion is reflected in the numbers of their events, trainings and trainees.

We heard great enthusiasm from PROGATI's CSO partners, which have become highly active in the anti-corruption movement, using their enhanced capacity and methods in the field with the networks. In particular, the CSOs working at the grassroots have shown high motivation and engagement with all stakeholders to work against corruption at the local level. Some partners, like Doorbar Network, have incorporated transparency and accountability into their own institutional strategies, clearly reflecting the high level of awareness that PROGATI has fostered amongst them. Moreover, CSO awareness of the roles and limitations of the public institutions has been enhanced quite significantly through their interactions with those institutions.

There are mixed observations about the awareness and enthusiasm of BUPF, MAB and IBFB, whose previous USAID experiences provided them with more institutional and material support and a broader range of local governance issues than would have been appropriate for PROGATI. Nevertheless, MAB and BUPF were eagerly engaged in the anti-corruption campaigns.

## **Desire to Continue**

All PROGATI partners have expressed a strong desire to continue working on accountability and transparency issues for varying reasons. Some really value the activities and feel the need to continue the "good work"; others want to continue getting USAID support for their work and are less attached to particular programmatic objectives. Some partners feel that it is important to continue the effort to accomplish a few things that PROGATI has started and others want to use the PROGATI experience to achieve additional things.

The public institutions clearly wish to continue working with something like PROGATI. The CAG Office values the work of PROGATI highly. On the other hand, the ACC has not been particularly happy with the perceived recent "discontinuation" of support, but remains eager to receive further assistance. Another example of enthusiasm and desire to continue is BEI's advocacy for the Audit Act, for which more time is required.

Some partners including JATRI, BUPF, MAB, and IBFB really focus more on continuation of USAID support and less on anti-corruption issues per se. By contrast, some partners such as BWCCI and MRDI feel the need for continuation mainly in order to expand and maintain their work – extending the hotline in Khulna for women entrepreneurs in the case of BWCCI, and more time and efforts for popularizing the RTI in the case of MRDI. Specialist partner Unnayan Shamannay, which has been working on budget analysis and advocacy for a long time, considers PROGATI an opportunity to work closely with the parliamentarians and thus desirable to them.

## **Working Environment**

Most of the partners of PROGATI appreciate the working environment of the program. Their satisfaction is particularly high regarding the participatory approach to planning and the high degree of flexibility in implementation of plans in order to be able to respond to the demand of the situation. Most partners have been able to develop their own work plans and budgets within the overall PROGATI framework, and in most cases adjustments in -plans were accepted by PROGATI as justified by changed circumstances. As mentioned in Section V.C., not all partners are equally happy about the extent of consultations in PROGATI planning and implementation. But, on the whole, PROGATI has been successful in managing so many partners at the same time and establishing a broadly appreciated positive working environment.

In the case of BAMU and JATRI, the creation of the physical infrastructure has given them an enviable working environment that earns them prestige. The BAMU unit is attractive to MPs and GOB agencies interested in research; the JATRI media center in the midst of the media industry is an attractive environment.

## **VI. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES**

### **A. What General Conclusions Should Be Drawn About the Program?**

The main conclusion from the PROGATI evaluation is that the Mission and implementation partners conducted sound diagnoses of the context and designed a straightforward, executable response that was carried out.

The caveat from the experience is that anti-corruption work in a dynamic political context required patience, flexibility, and persistence. After three years, a well-integrated, cross-sector movement is beginning to inform opinion and encourage behavior change at all levels of government and across Bangladeshi society.

The culture change fostered by PROGATI is still in its initial stages and the final goal of reduced corruption, especially in a country like Bangladesh, is a long-term proposition that will be influenced by many factors.

### **B. Lessons Learned — What Has Worked, Not Worked, and Why? Were There Surprises or Unintended Outcomes?**

The main lesson learned is that a sociological model, using three principal strategies, when applied diligently in a complex situation, can produce the desired results beyond what is expected of process-oriented indicators. The unexpected outcome, because it had not been envisioned by the original designers, or contemplated in the PMP, was the extensive development of linkages among previously disjointed or isolated government and non-governmental collectivities. These better integrated organizations and their trained people now form a movement for transparency and accountability that can be expected to be more effective over the long term than unconnected individual efforts.

One area of the plan that did not work was the M&E area for measuring perceptions. It did not work at the national level because too many intervening variables could change the results and also because the expected rate of change during the project period was overly ambitious. Too much precision was expected of the panel techniques, but, unexpectedly they contributed to communications among business people, CSOs and government, who usually do not meet to discuss these issues.

### **C. Best Practices**

Four best practices used by PROGATI management may be useful in other programs.

## **1. Seconding and Exchanges of Personnel**

Seconding, or exchange of personnel, is a repeated staffing and managerial theme between PROGATI and the GOB, among GOB agencies, and between the technical assistance providers and the GOB. This practice is described in our findings in the sections entitled: Achievement of Principal Objectives and also in Management and Administration.

## **2. Third Party Monitoring of Training**

PROGATI employed an objective third party to monitor its training program. The contractor, Eusaf & Associates, was given specific terms of reference and careful training in what was expected of them. This approach, similar to an external auditor for grants expenditures, expanded the M&E capacity of PROGATI and helped to assure the validity of the data from the training events. Importantly, this practice provides constant feedback for the improvement of the training program. The details of this practice are found in the Performance Measurement Systems section under Performance Indicators.

## **3. Facilitating and Providing a Neutral Table for Networking**

In our Achievement of Principal Objectives findings, we describe the three guiding principles: bring together, build relationships, and pursue opportunities that keep these groups in a sustainable creative interaction. PROGATI managers and partners have applied these principles systematically by providing facilitated discussion and meeting between people and organizations who had never communicated and, in some cases, who were in competition. Whether the meetings were held in the PROGATI office space, the Parliament, JATRI or BAMU meeting rooms, the environment was that of a neutral table, that is, an environment where members need not feel threatened or coerced. This best practice was one of the keys to achieving the networking and the movement toward accountability and transparency. In the discussion of Panel Surveys we point out that those efforts also were a form of neutral table by bringing representatives of diverse sectors together—an instance creative interaction.

## **4. Extensive Partnering with Host Country NGOs**

One of the key resources of Bangladesh's development history is its cadre of well-trained professionals in the NGO community. By incorporating an excellent selection of them as implementation partners PROGATI was able to benefit from their knowledge of the country, the people, and the local terrain—sociologically, as well as geographically. In turn, PROGATI benefited from their experience and commitment to social change, their contacts and networking relationships with public sector officials and other key program stakeholders, and their willingness to absorb new techniques and information from the offshore implementation partners, STTA, and other sources. Their exposure to these sources of knowledge and expertise, of course, improved their own long-range perspectives and plans, not just the immediate tasks of program implementation. This best practice was cost and time effective. Moreover, through this practice the program results will be more sustainable because the partners maintain the concepts and goals of responsibility and transparency in their own projects, both USAID-funded ones and those of the GOB and other donors.

## **VII. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Although specific recommendations have been made throughout the report, this chapter is reserved for a more overarching and program-wide consideration for the design of a follow-on anti-corruption program, as called for in the evaluation SOW. Specific recommendations, with references, are listed to conclude this chapter

The evaluation team agrees with the RIG observation that three or four more years will be needed to consolidate the process developed during the PROGATI program and achieve its sustainability. We are

judging from the initial state of development of PROGATI-supported institutions, the rate of change in their capacities and influence, and the pace of the movement toward transparency, accountability, and responsible governance in Bangladesh. Given the importance of this process to USG and GOB goals, we believe that such a further investment is highly desirable.

We recommend that the Mission consider building on the progress begun with PROGATI and its successful strategies in a cross-sector program targeting transparency, accountability, and responsible governance. Such a program should reflect the context of USG and GOB strategies. Until that process can be completed, the evaluation team recommends that measures be undertaken to avoid the loss of momentum now evident and to assure continued coordination within the Mission and with the international community.

JATRI has been one of PROGATI's intensive organizational development efforts as an intermediate objective to achieving the goal of strengthened investigative journalism. The Embassy and USAID placed great emphasis on its founding and substantial funding for the construction, staffing and STTA. Considering the high level of interest at the university in JATRI, it would be constructive and supportive of the effort for Mission personnel to participate as observers some of the strategic planning meetings and business meetings that PROGATI and the University hold. Presence would help build the relationship between the Mission and the University especially if the Mission wishes to make this a long-term commitment beyond PROGATI for promoting the media aspect of transparency and accountability.

Some of the areas where PROGATI has not worked actively and that could be picked up by a follow-on program include more support to the ACC. This should be accompanied by diplomatic efforts coordinated across the donor community to ensure that the ACC can continue to function independently and apolitically. These diplomatic initiatives should be complemented by advocacy work within the Parliament that helps MPs understand the importance to their work of an independent, unconstrained ACC. Another GOB entity that could benefit from work similar to PROGATI's program is the new Information Commission, created in 2009 in the context of the Right to Information Law.

The evaluation team also recommends that the Mission organize an internal committee to address transparency, accountability, and responsible governance issues across the Mission portfolio. That committee could ensure a cross-cutting approach and call attention to the need for improved and better articulated efforts in this area throughout the Mission portfolio.

Additionally, the evaluation team recommends that the Mission work closely with the international community to reorganize, strengthen and render more dynamic a round table on transparency, accountability, and good governance within the Local Consultative Group for the purpose of ensuring better coordination of such initiatives.

“Although funding of NGOs and CSOs will work, the donors have to work together and pressure the whole system so that the Secretariat will change.”

-UNDP, Personal opinion of Anonymous

In addition to the recommendations above, recommendations in this report and the accompanying annexes are noted and referenced in the following list:

*From Management and Administration, p. 13:*

Because the principal management constraint was timing and long delays were encountered due to the Government transitions, developing a consensus for approvals, and in negotiating the nature of PROGATI collaboration with the wide range of institutional partners, it is recommended that follow-on programming be sufficiently flexible to adapt to unanticipated and uncontrollable circumstances. These adaptations call for strategic planning and management agility on the part of both USAID and the implementation partner.

*Under alternative approaches for achieving results at greater efficiency, p. 14:*

For a complex and politically sensitive program, a contract, as opposed to a cooperative agreement or grant, can help USAID to maintain management control. As to whether full competition for a contract open to any bidder would be preferable to an IQC task order, the need to be ready to act in an evolving political environment is an important factor for USAID to consider. Management control and timeliness will also be issues for USAID in selecting an appropriate mechanism for any follow-on to PROGATI.

*In reference to sustainability and the new USAID SDLG program, p. 21:*

In achieving greater coordination with PROGATI or its successor, there should be some continuity with social audits, citizen scorecards, participatory budgeting, budget analysis, and training in fiscal responsibility and accountability that have been important PROGATI contributions.

*In reference to results indicators in Annex 10 Performance Measurement systems, p.79, 80:*

The national perception surveys are better left to other organizations interested in tracking the subject of corruption. The intended follow-up survey should not be carried out because the impact or change, if so measured, can not be attributed to project activities. (p. 80)

It would be better to use the budget allocation for specific studies of the performance of one or more of the key government institutions that have been in operation for at least two years, then the broad public opinion surveys. (p. 79)

*In reference to panel surveys in Annex 10, p.79:*

Do not do not ask of the panel survey technique the measurement of change in such a short time nor with statistical precision, but, by all means, convene these types of panels to gain perspectives and opinions on a given sector and to facilitate exchanges across areas of expertise.

In addition we would close with the following recommendations:

- USAID and DAI need to work together to ensure that JATRI and BAMU are consolidated to the extent possible by project termination, and that satisfactory mechanisms be developed to ensure their continuity and sustainability following PROGATI termination;
- That there be a USAID initiative through whatever vehicle(s) possible to sustain the momentum from PROGATI efforts and avoid backsliding in their efforts to prevent and raise consciousness on corruption issues by partner organizations once PROGATI terminates;
- That USAID seek ways to build upon the level of cooperation among locally-based or locally-active CSOs that has come together in PROGATI and support continuity of this cooperation;
- That USAID coordinate among the donor community public events to highlight the importance of the independence and relative autonomy of the ministries and Parliament of the ACC and CAG, provide public and diplomatic pressure to prevent regressive measures by the GOB.

## **ANNEX 1. STATEMENT OF WORK**

### **Bangladesh: Program Evaluations of Leaders of Influence and PROGATI and Rule of Law Assessment**

AID-388-TO-11-00006

#### **TASK TWO**

##### **Evaluation of Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (PROGATI).**

Pervasive corruption significantly limits Bangladesh's development and erodes public support for its democratic institutions. Corruption also makes Bangladesh more vulnerable to social and political upheaval, instability, and violence and provides a breeding ground for terrorism. A key objective of the US Government's (USG) foreign assistance in Bangladesh is to reduce corruption by promoting greater transparency and accountability in the management of public resources. USAID's approach emphasizes transparency in public management and enhancing the watchdog capabilities of civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media.

In July 2007, USAID awarded a contract to Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) to implement a planned \$18,185,876, four-year anti-corruption program known as Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (PROGATI). At a minimum, the contract specified that DAI, Inc. achieve the following principal objectives:

- (1) Strengthen a Parliamentary Budget Unit;
- (2) Provide technical assistance to support a civil society anti-corruption coalition development, public-private partnerships and significant citizen advocacy and watchdog initiatives;
- (3) Increase citizen group participation in understanding and developing program-based budgets for more external oversight of Government of Bangladesh (GOB) budgets;
- (4) Support the mass media to build its capacity as a public watchdog through the establishment of a Center for Investigative Journalism; and
- (5) Support parliamentary oversight committees and parliamentary accountability reforms.

The objective of this external evaluation is to assess the impact and lessons learned from PROGATI for consideration in the design to a follow-on anti-corruption program. The evaluation will:

- Test the technical and programmatic validity of the hypotheses on which the PROGATI program was designed;
- Assess the efficacy, cost-effectiveness, and impact of the PROGATI implementation tools and management structure in meeting the objectives;
- Evaluate PROGATI performance to date and assess results vs. contractual goals and indicators; and

- Make necessary recommendations to USAID Bangladesh.

**The audience for this evaluation is USAID Bangladesh.**

This task is for a performance evaluation of the approximately three years of implementation of the PROGATI program beginning in October 2007 to the present. The evaluation should review, analyze, and evaluate the PROGATI program along the following illustrative criteria, and, where applicable, identify opportunities and recommendations for improvement. In answering these illustrative questions, the Evaluation Team should assess both the performance of USAID and that of the implementing partner(s).

**Relevance.** The Evaluation Team should assess the relevance of the PROGATI approach.

- Has the Mission's multi-component "stand alone" anti-corruption project approach achieved desired results?
- Would a more integrated approach, in which anti-corruption activities are interspersed across the Mission portfolio, have been more successful?
- Were the PROGATI program assumptions accurate regarding requirements for promoting anti-corruption, good governance and integrity?
- Did the selected components (parliament, media, civil society, and public institutions) under PROGATI prove amenable to anti-corruption reform?
- Are the program and its various components and activities relevant from the perspective of the democracy and governance context? Are they providing viable anti-corruption alternatives?
- Did PROGATI select and work with the correct GOB counterparts?
- How did political events during the implementation period affect the success/failure of PROGATI interventions?
- Does the original hypothesis on which the PROGATI program approach was designed and the results/benchmarks remain valid?

**Management and Administration.** The Evaluation Team should assess management and administration of the implementing partner(s), as well as that of USAID.

To date, how effective has the DAI management structure and their acquisition and assistance tools (i.e., STTA, sub-contracts, sub-grants, training, etc.) been in obtaining program results?

- Has the DAI management structure helped to ensure optimal coordination and decision making to achieve stated objectives and avoid duplication of effort with other USAID or other donor programs?
- What alternative management structure and tools would/could increase effectiveness?
- Are the processes and procedures currently in place appropriate to guarantee PROGATI implementation is efficient, timely, and in accordance with USAID regulations?
- Did start-up activities (e.g., building rental, staffing, salary approval, agreements with progressive layers of implementers, and other administrative and financial actions) occur at an appropriate pace?

- Did DAI identify the right partners (i.e., sub-contractors and grantees) and mechanisms (i.e., sub-contracts and grants) to work with Bangladeshi organizations?
- What impact does the existing management/administrative structures have on the flexibility of PROGATI programs?
- **Cost Effectiveness.** The Evaluation Team will assess cost-effectiveness and efficiency against program impact, both in terms of time and money.
- Are results achieved under PROGATI being produced at an acceptable cost compared to alternative approaches accomplishing the same objectives?
- To what extent is PROGATI appropriately taking advantage of cost share and/or leverage opportunities?
- What, if any, alternative approaches exist which could achieve results at greater efficiency and what mechanisms can be recommended for implementing the alternative approaches?

**Impact.** The Team should evaluate partner(s) impact in implementing the scope of work. What has been the initial impact of activities implemented under PROGATI?

- Are partners planning their individual activities with the broader PROGATI objectives and sub-objectives in mind?
- How well have implementing partners worked as a team to coordinate work plans and activities towards achieving the overall objectives of the PROGATI program?
- Have the program activities been targeted at the appropriate beneficiaries to ensure the greatest impact in support of USAID Bangladesh's Governing Justly and Democratically Strategic Objective?
- How are communications and outreach components contributing to program objectives?
- Are there any externalities or unintended consequences related to implementation of PROGATI that USAID should consider?
- Is the focus of training and technical assistance activities primarily skills development, problem orientation, and/or problem identification? What is the appropriate mix to ensure impact?
- How have PROGATI activities reflected sensitivity to gender issues, in particular the needs and priorities of women with regards to public spending, anti-corruption policy and legislation?

**Performance Measurement Systems.** Measuring program impact requires the existence of sound performance monitoring systems at the level of individual partners as well as at the level of program management. The Evaluation Team should investigate whether systems have been established internally for tracking, monitoring, and reporting results attributable to PROGATI activities and whether these systems are effective and utilize independently verifiable information.

- Do performance monitoring systems at all levels effectively measure program impact?
- Are the indicators being used by USAID and the implementing partners meaningful? Why?
- Do indicators create perverse incentives for implementing partners? How?
- The latest 2009 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) from Transparency International (TI) shows Bangladesh tied for 139 (with Belarus, Philippines, and Pakistan) out of 180 countries, a huge jump from previous years.

- How much, if any, of this improvement can be attributed to PROGATI efforts?

**Sustainability.**

Are the processes, systems, and programs in place to ensure that the results and impact of PROGATI activities will be sustainable?

- What evidence has there been of the Government of Bangladesh and other Bangladeshi partners taking ownership of PROGATI activities?
- What obstacles exist for achieving sustainability?
- What measures should be taken to increase sustainability?

**Cross Cutting Issues.**

- How well has PROGATI integrated support to gender, the disabled, and minorities? (See Gender)
- What improvements have been made to increase program effectiveness in integrating these issues?

**Synergy with other USAID and Donor Funded Programs.**

- How effective is coordination within the various USAID Bangladesh teams (i.e., Economic Growth, Population Health Nutrition and Education, Food Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance) -- as well as within other Democracy and Governance (DG) activities -- in achieving PROGATI objectives that cut across all USAID Bangladesh Strategic Objectives?
- How effective is PROGATI coordination within the various other donors' anti-corruption activities? For example, how effective has PROGATI been in complementing other donor anti-corruption work including civil service reforms (DFID), parliamentary and media support (CIDA), parliamentary law and regulation (World Bank), and assistance to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ADB)?

**Client Satisfaction (GOB, beneficiaries, other stakeholders).**

- Is PROGATI on track to respond to the needs of program beneficiaries and to achieve their stated objectives?
- What do beneficiaries think about the program's impact thus far?
- What do leaders and staffs in the Parliament and the Parliament Secretariat think about PROGATI's mission and experience to date?
- What do media representatives, nongovernmental organizations, GOB media relations officers, Information Commission, etc. think about PROGATI?
- What do civil society and citizen organizations think about PROGATI?
- What do public officials, civil servants, local and regional government officials, and other stakeholders (e.g., Office of the Controller and Auditor General, Anti-Corruption Commission, GOB ministries, etc.) think about PROGATI?

**Other.** Are there other concerns by the program stakeholders (Contractor, GOB, local governments, other beneficiaries) during the evaluation process, not mentioned above, that USAID Bangladesh should consider?

### **RIG Audit**

Between August 25 and Sept 23, 2010 the USAID Regional Inspector General (RIG) based in Manila (RIG/Manila) will conduct a performance evaluation of the PROGATI program. The draft and/or final RIG reports, if available, will be included among the documents for Team review. USAID Bangladesh is not interested in duplicating the RIG effort. Rather, we expect the Team to build on the RIG findings and recommendations and formulate their own findings and recommendations. As we anticipate the RIG focus will be on contractor performance (e.g., management and administration, client satisfaction, and performance monitoring system), the Team should focus on PROGATI's overall approach for combating corruption within the USAID Bangladesh strategy (e.g., relevance, cost effectiveness, impact, and sustainability) as well as synergies with other USAID and donor funded anti-corruption activities.

## **ANNEX 2. TEAM BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARIES**

### **KRIS MERSCHROD — TEAM LEADER**

Kris Merschrod has 30 years of international experience in the design, implementation and evaluation of international development programs, including in Central and South America, Kosovo, Ukraine, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. His thematic experience is in three main areas: Organizational development, regional and corridor development strategies, capacity building, local and community development, and governance in relation to non-governmental organizations. His major paper on transparency and corruption had to do with NGOs. Mr. Merschrod has proven abilities in leading international project and evaluation teams, with strong management skills in areas of project planning, M&E systems, team development, PMPs, supervision of professional and technical staff, oversight of subcontracting and grants, financial management and due diligence. He was Chief of Party for USAID-funded programs in Costa Rica, Ecuador and Peru and a component area for CIDA in Honduras. These positions included designing and managing base-line and follow-up surveys to measure changes in practices, funding diversity, and management practices. Mr. Merschrod has a PhD in Development Sociology from Cornell University. In these programs Mr. Merschrod worked with ministries of the presidency, ministries of parks and reserves, forestry, fisheries all within the governance and policy focus of these programs. His Bangladesh experience was in the early 1980s and consisted of technical training to improve the research capabilities of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Center.

### **THOMAS MOORE — TEAM MEMBER**

Dr. Moore is a seasoned development professional with 30 years experience in strengthening local and regional governments and community-based organizations and in Latin America and recently in South Asia. For 16 years he has managed USAID programs in Latin America serving as Chief of Party for many of them. He has been very involved in developing and supporting Democracy and Governance programs the region for local government strengthening, local economic development, anti-corruption and rule of law, as well as environment and natural resources management, primary health care and basic education programs, always working closely with municipal and regional governments while also supporting greater citizen participation. Previously, he had 13 years service in strengthening local NGOs and community-based organizations in an NGO that he led. An anthropologist by training, he has a long record of successfully working with local communities, including indigenous communities, and with local, regional, and national governments in Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Honduras and Pakistan. Dr. Moore has a PhD in Anthropology from the New School. He has also conducted international training and exchange programs, led program design, proposal, and evaluation teams, conducted focus groups and surveys, and has served as an OAS elections observer in Peru and Ecuador.

### **TAIFUR RAHMAN — TEAM MEMBER**

Mr. Rahman, a Bangladeshi native, is a senior economist with many years of economic and social research, assessment and evaluation work in Bangladesh for various non governmental organizations. He brings a keen understanding of the perspective of NGOs *vis a vis* the government and the challenges thereof posed by a program like PROGATI that seeks to bolster the efforts of NGO's and civil society to be effective watchdogs of corruption in government. He also brings strong gender economic and social research skills to the PROGATI evaluation team that may also benefit the other teams undertaking the Leaders of Influence evaluation and a Rule of Law assessment. Mr. Rahman has an MS in Economics from the University of Dhaka. Mr. Rahman speaks and writes in English fluently and will be a critical member of the PRGATI evaluation team.

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## **ANNEX 4. PROGATI INTERVIEW LIST**

### ***Bangladesh Government, Judiciary, and Political Leaders***

Dr. M. Osman Farruk, former Member of Parliament and Minister of Education  
N.M. Jahangir Hossain, Joint Secretary, Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat  
Col. Hanif Iqbl, Deputy Chairman and Chief inspector, Anti-Corruption Commission  
M. Murshidul Huq Khan, Additional Deputy Comptroller & Auditor General  
Golam Rahman, Chairman, Anti-Corruption Commission

### ***United States Government***

Dianne Cullinane Democracy and Governance Adviser, USAID Bangladesh  
Nicholas J. Dean, Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Embassy, Bangladesh  
James Moriarty, United States Ambassador to Bangladesh  
Denise Rollins, Mission Director, USAID Bangladesh  
Dennis Sharma, Deputy Mission Director, USAID Bangladesh  
Kevin Sturr, Director Democracy and Governance, USAID Bangladesh  
Sherina Tabassum, Democracy and Governance Advisor, USAID Bangladesh

### ***International Partners***

Won Young Hong, Assistant Country Director, Democracy and Governance Cluster, United Nations  
Development Program

### ***Implementing Organizations***

Forhana Afroz, Program and Communications Manager, Management and Resources Development  
Initiative (MRDI)  
Jamil Ahmed, Chief Executive Journalism Training and Research Institute (JATRI)  
Selima Ahmed, Chairperson, Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI)  
Nargiz Akhtar, Vice President, Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF)  
Shamin Al Razi, Secretary General, Bangladesh Municipal Association (MAB)  
Minhaj Alam, Director, Democracywatch  
Asif Ali, Senior Advisor, Business Enterprise Institute  
Nurul Amin, PROGATI Public Accounts Specialist, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute  
A.K.M Azad, Joint Secretary General, BUPF  
Atarahui Islam Bulbul, Secretary General, BUPF  
Dibya Sutham Chakma, Program Officer, IBFB  
Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury, President, International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB)  
Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Advisor JATRI  
Amita Dey, PROGATI Civil Society Lead, AED  
Aminul Ehsan, PROGATI Civil Society Leader, Rupantar  
Rick Gold, former PROGATI Program Manager, DAI  
Kamrul Hasan, PROGATI consultant, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute  
Zahid Hossain, PROGATI Media Component Manager, IREX  
Nafees Imtiaz Islam, Membership Manager, IBFB  
Gazi Sohidullah Kamal Jhilu, Divisional Organizing Secretary, BUPF  
Dr. Mahfuz Kabir, Director Unnayan Shamunnay  
Mohashin Kabir, Monitoring and Reporting Coordinator for PROGATI, Democracywatch  
Jeremy Kanthor, PROGATI Deputy Chief of Party, DAI  
Susana Karim, Research Associate, Unnayan Shamunnay

Khorshed Alam Khan, Public Institutions Component Manager, DAI  
Samsul Alam Khan, Divisional President, BUPF

Rafiqi Islam Khokan, Executive Director, Rupantar  
Rokhsana Khondker, Executive Director, Khan Foundation  
Chandan Laheri, Coordinator, Steps Toward Development  
Carmen Lane, Democratic Governance Specialist, DAI  
Sumana Sultana Mahmud, PROGATI Civil Society Program Officer, AED  
Manash Mitra, PROGATI Parliament Component Manager, DAI  
Mujtaba Mahub Morshed, PROGATI Project Manager, Democracywatch

Hugh Orosco, PROGATI Chief of Party, DAI  
Anwarul Quadir BTFO, local governance program advisor, Rupantar  
Atiar Rahman, PROGATI Project Manager, BUPF  
Hasibur Rahman, Executive Director, MRDI  
Brig. Gen. (Retd) M. Mofizue Rahman, Executive Director and Advisor, IBFB  
Mofidur Rahman, PROGATI Budget Analyst with BAMU, DAI  
Dalar Kumar Saha, Office Manager, BUPF  
Dipak Kumar Sarkar, PROGATI Budget Analyst with BAMU, DAI  
Mamuda Begum Shelly, Secretary General, Doorbar Network  
Shamima Sultana, PROGATI Project Manager, MAB  
Nanda Lal Sutradhar, PROGATI Local Governance Lead, DAI

### ***Civil Society***

A.K.M. Azad, Chairman, Mesta Union Parishad, Sadar Jamalpur  
Aroma Dutta, Director, Private Rural Initiative Programs (PRIP Trust )  
Sk Md. Abu Hassanat, Chief Coordinator, Pollee Unnyon Prokolpa, Bogra  
Abdul Awal Mintoo, Former President of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry  
Sk. Abdul Quayum, Chairperson, Citizen Forum, Khulna  
Harun-or-Rashid, Chief Executive, Bogra Office, Light House  
Shamima Sultana Shilu, Chief Executive, Manob Sheba O Shamajik Unnayan Shangstha  
Anower Zahid, Executive Director, Integrated Community Development Association (ICDA)

### ***Group Interviews***

Citizen Forum, Khulna, 9 persons  
Civil society network, coordinated by Steps Toward Development, 7 persons  
Union Parishad chairmen, at BUPF, 8 persons

## ANNEX 5. PROGATI DESIGN TIMELINE

<b>Dates</b>	<b>National Events</b>	<b>USAID actions</b>
June 2001 - December 2005		ARD-led National Constituency for Strong Local Government, policy, civil society program
July 2001	TI publishes CPI for 2000 ranking Bangladesh as the most corrupt country in the world	
October 2001	BNP-led 4-party alliance government, under Khaleda Zia takes office	
2002, 2003, 2004, 2005	TI publishes CPIs with Bangladesh in last place continuing for 5 consecutive years.	
February 2004	GOB approves Anti-Corruption Act, creates ACC dissolving the Bureau of Anti Corruption (BAC)	
April 2004		KAP Survey on DG issues (ARD)
September 2004		DG Strategic Assessment of Bangladesh (ARD)
December 2004		Support for Development of USAID/Bangladesh AC Strategy (MSI).
December 2004 - December 2009		Five Estates of Democracy program (IRI), cross-sector coordination
January 2005		Mission approves AC Strategy
September 2005		CSS, FYs 2006-2010 approved; SO 11, More Effective and Responsive Democratic Institutions and Practices; Component 1, Anti-Corruption Reforms.
December 2005 - December 2008		RTI (I)-led Democratic Local Governance Program (DLGP), accountability in service delivery.
May 2006		AC concept paper circulated in Mission.
June 2006		USAID Anti-Corruption Interventions in Economic Growth report (Nathan Associates)
October 2006	4-party alliance Government term ends; 1st CTG under Iajuddin Ahmed takes over; elections scheduled for 22 January 2007. (1st CTG perceived as pro-BNP)	

Dates	National Events	USAID actions
11 January 2007	State of emergency declared; elections postponed; 1st CTG replaced by military-backed interim government under Fakhruddin Ahmed;	
January 2007 - January 2009	Interim Government rules under state of emergency; EC reorganized; crackdown on corruption; Special Powers Act allows arrests of many political leaders, including former PMs Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina.	
February 2007		Activity Design Document for AC program approved.
February 2007	Bangladesh adheres to UNCAC	
September 2007		TO under BRDG IQC awarded to DAI for PROGATI implementation; 10/1/07-9/30/11.

## ANNEX 6. PROGATI IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

<b>Dates</b>	<b>National Events</b>	<b>PROGATI Actions</b>	<b>USAID Actions</b>
6 October - 17 December 2007		PROGATI STTA start-up team in country.	
October - December 2007		PROGATI-USAID coordination meetings on revisions in August 2007 DAI proposal	
October 2007 - March 2008		Staff selection process, with gender balance.	
1 November 2007		COP arrives in country	
15 November 2007	Cyclone Sidr		
9 December 2007		PROGATI office established.	
15 November 2007		1st draft Year 1 WP submitted	
January - March 2008		Selection process for JATRI host; BRAC/IGS selected 23 March.	
19 February 2008		3rd draft Year 1 WP submitted.	
March 2008			Contract for AC Nielsen baseline study approved.
April - September 2008		Discussions with Parliament speaker on BAMU.	
April - September 2008		STTA on grant, sub-contract management, investigative reporting, public finance, civil society engagement.	
7 April 2008			Year 1 WP approved.
April 2008		First grant submitted to USAID (4/3/08); DW civil society work.	first grant approved (4/13/08),
16 April 2008		Draft PMP submitted.	
30 April 2008		Media Sustainability Index event (IREX)	
July - September 2008		10 local partner organizations selected.	
July - September 2008		Nielsen baseline perceptions Surrey conducted, presented.	

<b>Dates</b>	<b>National Events</b>	<b>PROGATI Actions</b>	<b>USAID Actions</b>
22 September 2008		Revised PMP with partner input to USAID.	
7 October 2008		First submission of participatory Year 2 WP.	
November 2008		Parliament Speaker allocates space for BAMU (prior to elections).	
November - December 2008		Unnayan Shamannay training of PS staff on budget issues, prior to elections.	
November 2008 - March 2009		Space leased, implemented for JATRI.	
29 December 2008	Elections held; AL victorious.		
8 January 2009	New AL government takes power; Sheik Hasina PM.		
22 January 2009	Upazila elections held.		
25 January 2009	New Parliament holds first session		
January - February 2009		Negotiations begin with new Ministers, Parliament.	
18 February 2009			TO modification approved; DCOP, new staff positions added; grants, sub-contracts adjusted.
24 February 2009	Money Laundering Prevention Act approved by Parliament		
18 - 22 March 2009		Anti-Corruption e-vent at Westin Hotel	
29 March 2009	Parliament approves Right to Information Act.		
March - April 2009		STTA with CSO, CAG, public audits.	
5 April 2009	Parliament approves Consumer Rights Protection Act		
6 April 2009	Parliament approves Upazila Parishad Act; supervision of upazila chairmen by MPs.		

<b>Dates</b>	<b>National Events</b>	<b>PROGATI Actions</b>	<b>USAID Actions</b>
April - September 2009		STTA with BAMU, JATRI, CSOs.	
7 May 2009		JATRI Center launched.	
17 May 2009	Cyclone Aila Stripes Bangladesh.		
May - September 2009		JATRI training on ethics and standards, developing sources, interviewing techniques,	
16 June 2009	Parliament approves Public Procurement Act		
22 June 2009		Revised Year 2 WP submitted.	
24 June 2009			USAID-ERD LOI approved; allows PROGATI to work with Ministries
1 July 2009	President establishes Information Commission; appoints 3 commissioners.		
14 July 2009	Parliament approves National Human Rights Commission Act.		
August - September 2009		Work with Ministries of Food and Disaster Management, LG Division begins.	
26 September 2009	Parliament approves Local Government Act (Union Parishad)		
October 2009 - March 2010		Training to BAMU, JATRI, CSOs, CAG, Ministries	
October 2009 - March 2010		STTA to	
October 2009 - February 2011		Work with BUPF, MAB under Windows of Opportunity component.	
25 October 2009		Year 3 WP submitted to USAID	

<b>Dates</b>	<b>National Events</b>	<b>PROGATI Actions</b>	<b>USAID Actions</b>
10 - 13 November 2009		PROGATI study tour with 10 senior GOB officials (including CAG, President Parliament Comm. On Anti-Corruption) to Thailand for 14th Anti-Corruption Conference.	
November 2009 - February 2010		Grants to Rupantar, DW, Khan Foundation for anti-corruption campaigns with civil society.	
17 December 2009			WPs for Years 2, 3 approved.
30 January 2010		Parliament oversight capacity survey	
25 March 2010		Modified PMP submitted to Mission, adding and dropping some indicators.	Mission approves modified PMP.
March - August 2010		Training to BAMU, Parliament Secretariat on budget analysis, tax policy	
12 July 2010	Parliament approves Public Procurement Act		
July - August 2010		CAG officials trained in ethics, fraud and corruption investigation.	
July - December 2010		Civil society campaigns, training, social audits, etc., expanded from Chittagong, Khulna to Rajshahi, Barisal Divisions.	
July - August 2010		BAMU Budget analysts trained in revenue projections.	
July - September 2010		Social audit of VGD program.	
August - September 2010			RIG program audit. of PROGATI
September 2009 - February 2010		Civil society training, TA on AC campaigns, citizen score cards, national budget oversight.	

<b>Dates</b>	<b>National Events</b>	<b>PROGATI Actions</b>	<b>USAID Actions</b>
31 October 2010		Year 4 WP submitted.	
September - December 2010		JATRI fellowships, internships	
January 2011	Discussion in Parliament, press of proposed law to diminish ACC authority.		
16 February 2011			Conditional approval of Year 4 WP

## ANNEX 7. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A reiterative process of interviews and document analysis was required for this diverse and complex program, because as the work progressed new perspectives that were not apparent in the SOW and background information needed to be explored in order to describe the broad accomplishments of the program. PROGATI is not the type of endeavor that can be evaluated with a set of interviews, tabulated data, and pat conclusions.

**Literature Review:** The team reviewed the literature focused on current assessments of governance and corruption as well as the transition period prior to and leading up to the last elections. News items from the election period through to the time of the evaluation were used. USAID and DAI provided numerous documents that allowed us to gain a better appreciation of the challenges facing program design and implementation.

The team reviewed the program design, statement of work, and task orders to understand the Mission expectations of DAI. The DAI response and the initial PMP and workplan were key documents followed by the semi-annual reports; annual work plans; the PMP addendum; special reports by STTA; published materials; success stories; surveys; partner videos and reports were all important reference materials. One M&E related document review included the multiple perception surveys related to corruption and confidence done for the newspapers as well as PROGATI.

In reality, there was a reiterative process in the use of reference materials to prepare for interviews, and then newly provided material provoked other questions that were answered through follow-on interviews in person and through telephone and e-mail communications. This reiterative process continued through to the final draft of this report.

**Interviews:** The first interviews in Bangladesh were conducted with the USAID staff and Embassy staff to explain our approach and, importantly, to obtain their expectations and impressions of PROGATI activities and accomplishments. The team then met with the DAI COP for an overall briefing of their managerial experience, program set-up, accomplishments, challenges and perspectives for the future needs in the program area. Then we interviewed each component manager. This, too, was a reiterative process in order to examine new areas of inquiry as new information and perspectives arose from the literature and interviews of the implementation partners.

Because the Deputy Chief of Party was expected to return before the team departed, his interviews were left to the end. Unfortunately he was not able to return as planned and a long Skype discussion was conducted between Dhaka and the US. Many emails were exchanged with him and the staff to clarify findings. For the most part, the leaders and managers of partners and participating agencies were interviewed in their offices, but some leaders came to the hotel when they came into Dhaka from outside the city. In some training sessions (BAMU, BWCCI, JATRI training, and BUPF in Dhaka, and Rupantar in Khulna) participant observations were made along with group interviews. Annex 4 is a list of the interviews conducted.

In this manner, the Team was able to reach the PROGATI local partners in each of the program areas: 1) media; 2) civil society; 3) academia; 4) government officials; 5) networks; and 6) business associations. In addition, third-party observers were interviewed for their impression of PROGATI, for example, the UNDP; A longtime CSO (PRIP) manager and member of the Human Rights Commission; the Chief of Party of the new PRODIP program, interested business people, and numerous beneficiary representatives of civil society, local governments, and networks, through the partner contacts.

### **Interview Guide:**

Initially the PROGATI Evaluation Team used an open ended interview guide, but as the background information on each interviewee became available more specific and relevant questions evolved. Since the evaluators are experienced interviewers focusing on qualitative and process oriented questions, as well as specific results, the interview guide proved unnecessarily rigid. For example, early in the literature review and the interviews, hypotheses were developed as to the importance of the program beyond the stated goals and the PMP indicators. These, the linkage and movement development hypotheses, brought about a new series of questions and another review of the documents to examine the evidence to support or reject those hypotheses.

The report outline shows the diverse areas of inquiry covered by the evaluation methodology, from such abstract yet basic areas such as the development challenge itself to the Mission and PROGATI response. More mundane questions such as the size of the management staff, grants and STTA tracking, and M&E methods were addressed with this methodology too.

The report outline was taken from the final scope of work prepared by the Mission. Descriptions of the findings came directly from the methodology described above—document reviews and interviews.

### **Feedback from the Implementing Agency and the Mission:**

Part of any evaluation includes feedback from both the Mission and the implementing agency. This is necessary feedback to improve the accuracy of the report as well as respond to the SOW. We were able to conduct the presentation of initial impressions and findings, and they were fruitful, but we were not able to go through a draft stage for feedback due to the time constraints described below.

### **Preliminary Presentation to the Mission:**

On 17 February, the USAID Mission was able to set up a conference at the American Club—the Mission was closed for business that day—in which the PROGATI evaluation team presented its preliminary findings. The Leaders of Influence program (LOI) evaluation team and the Rule of Law (ROL) assessment team also presented their finding at the same conference. The Ambassador, Mission Director, Deputy Mission Director, Program Officer, Governance Advisor, Democracy and Governance Director and his staff all attended and provoked a lively discussion that was quite helpful to the PROGATI evaluation team. We believe we have taken into account all of the questions, comments, criticisms, and helpful suggestions offered during that presentation.

### **Constraints:**

The main constraints during the evaluation were time and timing: 1) the lack of time to review the documents completely before interviewing so that more in-depth, first interviews could have been prepared, and 2) the long holidays during the interview period just prior to departure, particularly with public sector partners. That holiday period reduced the number of interview days by more than 25%. The long holiday prior to departure also meant that the planned briefing of initial findings had to be moved up and preparation time taken from interview time. As explained above, written drafts were not provided to the Mission or the implementing agency (DAI) because of the in-country time constraints.

### **Deliverables:**

Although this evaluation is more a performance evaluation than a rigorous impact evaluation in terms of quantitative, before and after data, the findings, especially the holistic finding of increased linkages and inter-agency confidence or trust, explain an impact that was vaguely desired but never concretely defined in project design documents. This kind of focused research, but with ample peripheral vision, and clearly established methodology made those holistic findings possible.

## ANNEX 8. DOCUMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONS BY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

### 1. Strengthen a Parliamentary Budget Unit

The formation of the Budget Audit Management Unit (BAMU) within the Parliament Secretariat (PS) began in the first year of the program. The longstanding need for a strong budget analysis unit was identified by a UNDP study in 2004. PROGATI conducted an assessment on Parliamentary budget analysis needs and priorities, and on 30 March 2008, the report of the assessment was presented to the Speaker and Secretary of the Parliament. The presentation and the report received a positive response from the Speaker and the Secretary;<sup>48</sup> BAMU was approved and staffed in the same year by the Speaker and PS.<sup>49</sup> During this time institutional capacity was created and developed, allowing PROGATI to be ready to engage the MPs, once the new Parliament was formed in early 2009. Then it took time for BAMU to actually address MP needs. BAMU was only able to assume full operation in the second half of 2010 with 10 full-time staff members seconded from the PS (7 are permanent staff; 3 are seconded from the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs). PROGATI provides two budget analysts who work fulltime in the BAMU office. The evaluation team visited the office and met the key staff members of BAMU and found it well equipped and, more importantly, staff that was enthusiastic about their work.

PROGATI's local partner Unnayan Shamannay (US), a reputable research organization in Bangladesh, has worked from the beginning to train BAMU staff members. The evaluation team observed one such training program on the topic of public expenditures, and found the content of the training very relevant, and both the quality of the presentation and interaction with participants quite high.

The USAID Regional Inspector General (RIG) in its memo of September 2010 raised serious questions about BAMU's long delays and its potential for sustainability<sup>50</sup>. However, from our discussions, interviews and observations, BAMU has achieved notable progress since that time and is emerging as a needed and much appreciated unit within the Parliament with the potential of becoming sustainable; it is already creating demand among MPs and has numerous champions, among them M. K. Alamgir, the current Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission (PAC), Professor Ali Ashraf, and M A Mannan. BAMU has been including the female and opposition MPs with equal importance. We support the RIG recommendation that USAID work with the implementing partner to develop an implementation plan to consolidate the work with BAMU. We expect PROGATI to meet that need in Year 4, as per their work plan. PROGATI is facilitating collaboration between BAMU and CSOs at the national and grassroots levels.<sup>51</sup> National-level CSOs work as part of the community of practitioners facilitated by PROGATI to provoke discussion and constructive engagement of the CSOs in the budget process; grassroots CSOs and networks engage the MPs through citizens' monitoring of public expenditure at the local government and administration levels. ROGATI local partners Rupantar<sup>52</sup> and Unnayan Shamannay are the key facilitators of the local monitoring.

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<sup>48</sup> Bachrach, Elinor B. *Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat, Budget Analysis Monitoring Unit (BAMU) Needs Assessment and Recommendations Report*, 1 April 2008.

<sup>49</sup> PROGATI. *Semi-Annual Report – 1 April to 30 September 2008*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> USAID Office of the Inspector General, Manila, "Audit of USAID/Bangladesh's Promoting Governance, Accountability and Integrity Program." Report N. 5-388-11-00X-P, 13 December 2010.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with N. M. Jahangir Hossain, Joint Secretary, Parliament Secretariat, in the BAMU office, Dhaka, 14 February 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Rupantar" in Bangla means "transformation." This Bangladeshi NGO is a major PROGATI partner in its civil society component, and also in work with local governments under Windows of Opportunity.

BAMU is still in its early days, and without further consolidation of the achievements, it may not be able to accomplish its full potential, but it is open to substantial collaboration with other PROGATI partners, such as the media. The PS provides staff and permanent infrastructure for BAMU operations, but ownership of it by the next Parliament will be essential to its sustainability. BAMU also needs to engage more closely with the Parliamentary Standing Committee and with the Finance Ministry to encourage more effective budget monitoring.

## **2. Provide technical assistance to support civil society anti-corruption coalition development, public-private partnerships and significant citizen advocacy and watchdog initiatives**

PROGATI has involved many local partners in support of CSOs, public-private partnerships and citizen advocacy and watchdog initiatives.

### ***a. Work with Public Institutions***

The Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) has been a PROGATI contractor/partner from the beginning, providing technical assistance (TA) to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General [of Bangladesh] (CAG), PAC, and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Additionally, through BEI, PROGATI is working to enhance internal control mechanisms within the two ministries with which PROGATI is working, Food and Disaster Management (MFD), and the Local Government Division of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRDC).

With the former, a major initiative, which PROGATI coordinated closely with the Ministry and local committees on the union parishads (UP) level is the social audits of the United Nations World Food Program in Bangladesh, the Vulnerable Groups Development program (VGD). One more ministry is scheduled to be added during PROGATI's fourth year, the Ministry of Health.

BEI's work with CAG has been particularly strong. It has been training audit officials across the country, using audit manuals developed for specific departments and selected by the CAG office. The manuals were shared with the National Board of Revenue (NBR), as well as CAG. CAG prioritized the customs department for audit training; BEI developed the corresponding manuals for PROGATI and has trained 40 customs officials. CAG has traditionally been viewed as a silent and behind-the-scenes organization, about which the general population knows hardly anything. Now the CAG has been speaking in public forums and to the media about the role of his office in promoting accountability within different departments of the government. The CAG Director has also been traveling outside Dhaka to interact with the CSO networks. The grassroots networks confirmed to the evaluation team that they had opportunities to interact with the CAG and his officials in many districts outside Dhaka.

Demand has arisen within the CAG office for training audit officials and it has asked PROGATI to provide training of trainers (TOT); now, at least six PROGATI-trained audit officials have become regular trainers within the institution. PROGATI has also provided support in setting up a media cell in the CAG office, which enables the office to disseminate its message.

BEI has also been actively advocating for the Audit Act, still being reviewed by the Parliament. The presence of the former Auditor General and other CAG officials on the BEI team has facilitated access to this highly secretive public institution and increased its openness to PROGATI objectives. BEI has also been working with the PAC to relieve the backlog in public expenditure audits.

PROGATI, through BEI, is now working to incorporate CAG activities into all government training curricula so that at least the government officials have an understanding of the importance of CAG's work.<sup>53</sup>

DAI has had no grant or sub-contract agreement with the ACC. However, BEI facilitated constructive interactions between CAG and ACC, and involved them in a number of workshops, including one on "Documenting Cases of Fraud and Corruption," the first ever joint training effort between these two institutions. PAC also has been interacting with both ACC and CAG, facilitated by PROGATI through BEI.

In PROGATI's civil society work, there was close coordination with the ACC, particularly in the elaboration of posters and other communications materials distributed by the district-level ACC units on Anti-Corruption Day in 2009. The ACC Chairman and Director General confirmed that those anti-corruption posters had raised ACC's image; he regretted that there had been little recent collaboration.<sup>54</sup> In Year 4, PROGATI plans to involve the ACC, together with the partner ministries in a joint effort to develop anti-corruption plans. The PROGATI civil society and local governance programs have worked closely with the ACC, for example, the NGO implementation partners Rupantar, Khan Foundation, and Democracywatch, as well as the civil society networks, Steps Towards Development and Doorbar Network, and also the BWCCI, have coordinated anti-corruption campaigns with the ACC.

### ***b. The Local Government Bodies***

The Municipality Association of Bangladesh (MAB) and the Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF) had been supported by USAID in earlier projects on local governance. PROGATI included them as partners, under their Windows of Opportunity component, mainly to provide continuity of USAID supports to these two important associations and, in doing so, gained access to two important levels of governance country-wide.

BUPF has almost 4,500 members that include almost all the UPs of Bangladesh, totaling around 60,000 elected representatives all over the country. With the PROGATI, BUPF developed a Handbook on Transparency and Accountability in Resource Management and organized training for UP representatives. Some 125 representatives have been trained so far to identify problems of accountability and transparency in the UPs. Of these, 25 representatives have been trained as trainers (TOT), and are now BUPF resources for conducting further training.

Similarly MAB, whose membership includes 222 municipalities, has been involved in PROGATI training and seminar and has produced a "Transparency and Accountability Memo" with methods for accountability and transparency in municipal activities and expenditures. Both MAB and BUPF have developed codes of ethics for their members as part of their commitment to PROGATI.

PROGATI has fostered stronger collaboration between these two local government associations through joint seminars. Both associations expressed the need for an accountability and transparency follow-on program to PROGATI.

### ***c. The Business Community***

PROGATI has been providing training, advocacy and field support to the Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI) since June 2009. Training for women entrepreneurs included techniques for avoiding corrupt practices and anti-corruption advocacy. With PROGATI support, BWCCI

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<sup>53</sup> Interview with PROGATI Chief of Party, Hugh Orozco, 8 February 2011.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with ACC Chairman, Golam Rahman, and Deputy Chairman, Col.hanif Iqbal, at the ACC Office in Dhaka, 20 February 2011.

has established advocacy working groups at national level and in one division. They conducted studies of the impact of corruption on women entrepreneurs and use them effectively in anti-corruption advocacy. Their national-level seminars were attended by high level policy makers, including the Finance Minister, Commerce Minister, Home Minister, and the US Ambassador. With PROGATI support, BWCCI set up a hot-line for women entrepreneurs in Khulna Division that provides counseling and useful information. The hotline is open 9 to 5 each working day.

PROGATI also partners with the International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB), an association of 260 businesses. Originally organized with US Embassy support in 2006, IBFB was included in PROGATI to provide continuity of that support after the IRI program ended in September 2008. IBFB's major engagement in transparency and accountability initiatives comes from the research and support that PROGATI has provided. Their interest and effort has been on anti-corruption in business transactions and reducing bureaucracy. Their economic and political weight adds stature to such initiatives. These are prosperous businessmen who should be able to obtain additional support from other sources.

### **3. Increase citizen group participation in understanding and developing program-based budgets for more external oversight of GOB budgets**

To promote accountability and transparency at the local level PROGATI has introduced social audits and citizens' monitoring on service delivery using community score cards with programs of two ministries through strong grassroots networks.

This is a difficult context for citizen participation because PROGATI's partners in the GOB focus on the national budget, not local budgets. The national budget is complex and difficult to explain to grassroots organizations. The national budget is not broken down by geographical area. Thus demands for budget allocations at the local level would take several years to work their way through the system.

PROGATI's initial local partners for its civil society work were Democracywatch (DW), the Khan Foundation (KF), and Rupantar Foundation, each a solid, long-established NGO with substantial other donor funding and significant self-generated resources, mainly through micro-credit activities. They have helped consolidate PROGATI's work in their respective geographic areas. PROGATI began working in two divisions of Bangladesh, Chittagong and Khulna. This base was expanded in Year 3 to Rajshahi and Barisal Divisions. While it is important to consolidate interventions in targeted local areas, we believe that future initiatives would do well to expand the geographic reach of these interventions and, thereby, gain critical mass.

Khan Foundation has been working with USAID since 1995. It works through a network of 700 NGOs across the country. Under PROGATI, it has been working in a number of districts in Chittagong, Rajshahi and Barisal divisions. KF is working closely with of district-level offices of the ACC and TIB to engage citizens in oversight of the use of public resources at the local level.<sup>55</sup>

Rupantar has been working with civil society and local governments since 1995; its relationship with USAID dates from 2000. It also has longstanding multiple donor support for a wide range of programs, as well as self-generated resources. In addition to PROGATI, Rupantar currently participates in the USAID/Bangladesh Leaders of Influence (LOIP) program and also implements under a direct cooperative agreement the Improving Local Governance by Strengthening Union Parishad and Creating Citizen Awareness (ILLG) program in areas affected by Cyclone Sidr.

Rupantar has its headquarters in Khulna and maintains a Dhaka office. It began its work in the Khulna and Bagerhat division, and it now has a strong presence in the Rajshahi and Barisal divisions, where it is

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with Rokhsana Khondker, Executive Director, Khan Foundation, at KF office, Dhaka, 13 February 2011.

also working with PROGATI. Since it began working with PROGATI it has incorporated anti-corruption activities into its long-term plans.

Democracywatch is another long-established USAID partner with extensive activity in the Chittagong division. It has been promoting democracy, human rights, good governance, and gender awareness activities since 1995. Recently, significant PROGATI civil society interventions have expanded through the use of established civil society networks, principally Steps Toward Development and the Doorbar Network<sup>56</sup>. These grassroots networks have a strong gender focus; Doorbar arose out of preparations for the 1995 UN Conference on Women in Beijing. In their work with PROGATI they conduct anti-corruption campaigns, participatory local government budgets, and citizen monitoring with community scorecards of VGD and UP service delivery.

#### **4. Support the mass media to build its capacity as a public watchdog through the establishment of a Center for Investigative Journalism**

Investigative journalism is relatively new. Journalism in Bangladesh is dangerous profession. The US State Department Report on Human Rights in Bangladesh for 2009 indicated that three journalists were killed, 84 were injured, one was arrested, 73 were threatened, and 23 had cases filed against them during the year. This environment leads to self-censorship for fear of retribution. Although the goal is objective investigative journalism, it will not protect the journalists from the pressures described.

The PROGATI SOW called for the establishment of a media watchdog agency. The result is the Journalism Training and Research Institute (JATRI), hosted by BRAC University's Institute of Governance Studies (IGS). The draft RIG report observes, correctly, that JATRI interventions were behind schedule and that the USAID logo was not displayed in the JATRI office.<sup>57</sup> But this evaluation, conducted almost six months later, observed JATRI ethics training in process, the research library, and other resources, and finds that JATRI is now actively engaged in training and investigative journalism techniques, is consolidating a well-implemented research center, and is emerging as a valuable and important PROGATI legacy.<sup>58</sup>

PROGATI provided JATRI with substantial office and information technology infrastructure and STTA in investigative journalism training and research. Now high profile Bangladeshi trainers conduct the programs organized by JATRI. Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI), a consulting firm that works closely with the principal media houses in Dhaka, has also provided experienced and respected trainers.<sup>59</sup>

MRDI under its agreement with PROGATI was an advocate for enactment of the Right to Information Act (RTI) among civil society, the media, and the Government. Since that law was promulgated by the GOB in March 2009, it has conducted workshops on the RTI Act at the divisional and district level with local media and CSOs and has published a manual on RTI for journalists. MRDI has included the newly created Information Commission (IC) in its workshops. MRDI has trained CAG staff on media relations

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<sup>57</sup> "Audit of USAID/Bangladesh's Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity Program (Report No. 5-388-11-00X-P)" 13 December 2010

<sup>58</sup> Interviews with Jamil Ahmed, JATRI Chief Executive, and Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, a prominent Bangladeshi journalist, in the JATRI office, Dhaka, 13 February 2011.

<sup>59</sup> Interestingly, the evaluation team perceived some jealousy between JATRI and MRDI. We attribute this to MRDI concerns about competition from JATRI, which they helped train and set up. We believe that time will allow both institutions, with somewhat different perspectives and priorities, to complement each other effectively in support of media research and training.

and has published a handbook on audit terminology for the journalists. It also prepared a disclosure policy for the ACC and trained ACC officials at the district level.<sup>60</sup>

One of the underestimated and perhaps under described, activities has been the organizational development skills and effort that POGATI put into the establishment of JATRI as an organization both before the inauguration celebrated by the US Embassy and USAID in May of 2009 and since then. Initially one of the options was to work with an organization with established media credentials (MRDI), but after extensive study using STTA and the PROGATI Media Component Manager, the IGS at BRAC University was selected to be a suitable host organization with the idea that JATRI could become, potentially, an institute or school of journalism. IGS, however, is a dependency of BRAC University and the university is managed by an Academic Council. Hence the decision making, planning, and staffing process has had to be convincing to key personalities from the level of the Chancellor, the Academic Council, IGS, and the advisory board of JATRI. Bringing all of these actors to the neutral table that PROGATI has provided time and again required all of the skills and patience of the PROGATI team.

JATRI personnel and managerial staff have been participants in the annual PROGATI workplan development as well as in the task of developing the grants for STTA and material for the establishment of JATRI. This interaction was part of PROGATI's effort to build linkages among partners. One of the organizational chores has been to facilitate a consensus among the key actors described above on the vision and mission of JATRI. The plan for sustainability was not completed when the evaluation was done, but it was understood to be a key item in the workplan for discussion with the USAID Mission. There was a debate, not necessarily an either/or situation, over whether JATRI should be a media training institute with courses and a center for investigative work, or a journalism school with an academic as well as investigative focus.

Considering that this instruction building process is less than two years in the making, and the high expectations that all involved have, one of our recommendations is that the Mission become involved as a participant observer in the process so that, aside from this report and PROGATI reports, it will be able to make a considered opinion for possible inclusion of JATRI in the design of a follow-on anti-corruption program.

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Hasibur Rahman, Executive Director, MRDI, at the MRDI office, Dhaka, 13 February 2011.

## **ANNEX 9. NARRATIVE OF MANAGERIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. Start Up**

The timelines provided in Annexes 5 and 6 show the rhythm of start-up and implementation of PROGATI. Nevertheless, it is important to put those facts into a managerial and administrative narrative that evaluates the pace of the program.

The agreement with USAID was signed on 19 September 2007. DAI fielded its start up team in the first days of October 2007 and began both office set up and discussions with potential partners in a dynamic of participation that became the hallmark of PROGATI planning style. On 15 November 2007, the draft first-year workplan (WP) was submitted to USAID. That WP went through three iterations. The third and final version was submitted on 19 February 2008. Although it was given verbal approval by USAID in late February 2008, formal approval only occurred on 7 April 2008. Clearly more expeditious negotiation and approval of this work plan would have allowed PROGATI to bring some of its sub-agreements on board sooner, particularly for the civil society and media components.

The first draft of the PROGATI Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) was submitted to USAID in April 2008. It went through several iterations, and a final version was submitted in September 2008 when it was, subsequently, approved by USAID. The evaluation team believes that this effort could have gotten underway sooner, without the need to await a WP approval beforehand.

### **B. Establishing the Office**

The start up team identified the office, reconditioned and equipped it during the first two months. Project personnel were also identified and employed within the same period. This was a relatively fast start-up. Short-term technical assistance (STTA) began at the same time, developed baseline assessments, and provided the basis for managerial decisions and strategies for engaging the key partners during the same, first semester.

### **C. Key Staff**

DAI approached the selection of staff from three perspectives: 1) experience; 2) linkages to the institutions related to the components; and 3) gender. The key technical and administrative positions are filled by males and females with gender equity. An important part of the staffing is an unusual managerial best practice--seconding. In PROGATI's sub-agreements with key target institutions, they second personnel with expertise to work on the program for its duration. Thus, personnel with relevant expertise and seniority are brought into the program. They bring with them the contacts and knowledge of the institution, its history, its function and political stature in the larger constellation of institutions of the sector. This is an invaluable perspective for building and strengthening a program. Another positive aspect of seconding is that the person, by his/her experience with other professionals and the subject such as accountability and transparency, becomes more aware of the other organizations. As one of the seconded professionals said, "I have been changed for life."

### **D. Seconding and Exchanging**

Examples of the implementation of team building and management by means of seconding and exchanges include: Expected Results (ER3) the PROGATI Public Institutions component and the CAG; ER4 the PROGATI Parliament component and GOB Finance Division; and the PROGATI budget analysts and GOB Finance Division.

For ER1, the PROGATI Media component manager left journalism to join PROGATI.

Among other public and private institutions similar exchanges of personnel occurred: JATRI and Media; BEI and CAG; BAMU and the Ministry of Law, Justice; and Parliamentary Affairs and ACC.

PROGATI also arranged a series of internships for CAG staff from the CAG media cell to spend time in local media houses. As with the other exchanges or seconding, the internships offer an opportunity to see how the media works and how the CAG could provide information more effectively to journalists.

## **E. Assessment of Component Areas and Potential Partners**

During the start-up period PROGATI used STTA to develop relations with key institutions and sectors that would form the basis of each component and also become members of the Advisory and Management Groups. During the first six months PROGATI-sponsored STTA did assessments of potential media partners (ER-1) and also of BAMU and the Parliament Secretariat (ER-4). They established a baseline panel and public opinion survey for both the evaluation of future impact and an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of media in general.

By the end of the first semester four key partners (Democracywatch, BEI, IGS and the PS) had been identified and brought into the consultative process. During the second semester these four key partners, representing links and strengthening capacity for all four components, held meetings and exchanges (the neutral table) that became the pattern for establishing linkages between civil society and GOB institutions that had never happened before in Bangladesh. During the second semester the number of partners was expanded to ten organizations.<sup>61</sup>

## **F. Local Partners and Networking**

As stated elsewhere in this report, one of the most impressive strengths of PROGATI management has been its ability to engage Bangladeshi partner institutions and facilitate the process of bringing them together to find areas of mutual interest and potential collaboration outside the usual institutional structures, thereby allowing for an expansion of trust, meeting, sharing criteria, and developing mechanisms for mutual agendas and collaboration. This progress, if anything, should go a long way toward consolidating and sustaining collective efforts toward transparency, accountability and responsible governance in Bangladesh. The impressive list of local partners, both public sector and private, with which PROGATI has had direct agreements for program implementation and integration includes:

The Parliament Secretariat (PS)  
The Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)  
The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MFD)  
The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, and Cooperatives (MLGRDC)  
The Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB)  
The Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF)  
Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI)  
Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI)  
BRAC University Institute for Governance Studies (IGS)  
Democracywatch (DW)  
Doorbar Network  
International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB)  
Khan Foundation (KF)  
Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)  
Rupantar Foundation  
Steps Toward Development (STD)  
Unnayan Shamunnay (US)

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<sup>61</sup> PROGATI, Semi-Annual Report – 1 April to 30 September 2011.

This list<sup>62</sup> does not include institutions that were indirectly involved in PROGATI, such as the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament, with which PROGATI worked through its other partners, and the Information Commission (IC), with which MRDI and the civil society component NGOs worked closely in advocacy for the dissemination of the Right to Information Act (RTI). Nor does it include myriad local governments, locally-based civil society forums, women's organizations, local CSOs, small businesses, and others with which these sub-agreement partners worked.

## **G. Advisory and Management Groups**

From the assessment and identification of potential partners described above, two groups were formed during the start up period – an Advisory Group of senior leaders and a Program Management Group consisting of operations managers of those same partners. This managerial approach was another indicator of manner in which PROGATI brought together leaders, facilitated neutral tables that helped build trust and confidence among the partners and led the institutions from what was illustrated in Figure 1 to Figures 2 and 3 during the following two years. Furthermore, these groups became part of the PROGATI quarterly meetings to assess progress and advise the component managers.

## **H. Grants Management**

DAI provided appropriate short-term technical assistance (STTA) to help train and put in place the DAI grants management system, based on a simple Excel spreadsheet, to carry out its responsibilities and meet USAID requirements. The spreadsheet output kept the USAID Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) up to date on USAID-approved grants and sub-contracts.

## **I. Overall Program Implementation**

The problem of approvals delays continued throughout PROGATI implementation. The Year 2 workplan was submitted to USAID on 7 October 2008, but negotiations on a final version of it, which included a significant task order modification, dragged on until 17 December 2009, the same date on which the Year 3 workplan, submitted on 25 October 2009, was approved. The Year 4 workplan, submitted to USAID on 31 October 2010, received a conditional approval on 17 February 2011. We understand that USAID/Bangladesh was understaffed during this time, but those management constraints come with a cost. Moreover, we believe that both DAI and USAID had the responsibility of insisting on more expeditious negotiation of these approvals.

DAI delayed its development of the project management plan (PMP) until April 2008, ostensibly because the WP had not yet been approved. In our interpretation, this proposed PMP could have been submitted much earlier, and the revision of that draft took another six months. Similarly, the first sub-agreement with a local partner, Democracywatch (DW), was delayed until May 2008, eight months into the first year. For implementation of the ER-1 Media, there was a delay of four months for approval of the training contracts with Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) and the Mass-Line Media Centre. That put off the start of those activities until the second year. Other grants and sub-contracts were approved promptly, but it is the bottlenecks that slow programs and, in this case, it was a whole component that was held back.

There were, of course, other obstacles, mainly political and administrative, that were beyond the control of either USAID or DAI and its partners and which caused unusual delays in program implementation. The long military-backed interim government and the delay of elections until 29 December 2008, made it very difficult to bring public sector interventions on board when originally planned. PROGATI was able

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<sup>62</sup> DAI. *Semi-Annual Report – 1 April 2010 to 30 September 2010*, presented to USAID 30 November 2010.

to work closely with the interim Parliament Secretariat (PS) to prepare the way for the full-fledged program once the new Government was in place. The PS understood what PROGATI was all about and how they could best collaborate with it. Direct work with GOB Ministries required a letter of intent (LOI) between USAID and the Bangladesh Ministry of Finance's Economic Relations Division (ERD) and the long delay in obtaining that approval, finally granted on 24 June 2009, further hampered progress with the public sector components. Once the new Parliament was in place, discussions with the PS, over whether or not an LOI with them was needed, held up work with the BAMU and the PAC. Ultimately, the LOI was signed in September of 2008, and the PS began working closely with PROGATI in Year 2.

## ANNEX 10. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS

PROGATI's proposed performance monitoring plan (PMP)<sup>63</sup> responded to the requirements stated in the task order.<sup>64</sup> Accordingly, the PMP was approved by the mission on 12 November 2008. It was implemented as planned until the amended PMP<sup>65</sup> was approved in March of 2010 in order to match new USAID output indicator units of analysis (person days), and to reflect the changes in PROGATI partners as well as the results of the planned review of the original PMP during the last quarter of FY 2010. A few indicators were dropped that appeared to be impractical to objectively measure, e.g., style and approach of investigative reporting, and expert knowledge of impact of office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) audits. Nevertheless, the basic structure and approach of the PMP remained the same.

### A. Monitoring and Evaluation

During program startup, PROGATI identified a well-prepared M&E manager and provided timely short term technical assistance (STTA) to set up the database and reporting system. USAID M&E requirements at the time of implementation were focused on process indicators and not on the measurement of impact or results. The original design document suggested illustrative results indicators, but then stated, "However, DG will need to develop indicators in conformance with the new indicators that have been recently developed by the Office of Foreign Assistance."<sup>66</sup> To its credit PROGATI had both performance and results indicators in the PMP and went on to measure baselines for the results indicators and then did follow-up surveys or key informant panels.

### B. Performance Indicators

Each component had performance indicators for each type of activity: training, technical assistance, workshops, campaigns, etc. All participants and organizations involved in these activities were entered into DAI's technical and administrative management information system (TAMIS). This database and data entry software is a proven and dependable way to track events and people and it reflects the PMP structure of activities, expected results and components. The data can then be disaggregated by gender and type of involvement or it can be and was used to generate the periodic reports showing accomplishments against targets. It is a solid management tool.

PROGATI contracted Eusaf & Associates to monitor the training events from various managerial and tracking perspectives: 1) attendance records, 2) quality of facilities and food, 3) quality of the instructors, etc.<sup>67</sup> PROGATI was able to expand the capacity of the M&E component by providing third party oversight. There was only one person in charge of M&E and for that person to have covered all events and monitor the work of the training partners, e.g., Democracywatch, Rupantar, Khan Foundation, Unannay Shamannay, BEI, MRDI, among others, would have been impossible. This third party oversight for M&E is a best practice.

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<sup>63</sup> PROGATI. Performance Monitoring Plan, 22 SEP 2008, Dhaka.

<sup>64</sup> DFD-1-04-05-00220-00 9/14/2007

<sup>65</sup> Addendum, Performance Monitoring Plan, PROGATI, 25 MAR 2010, Dhaka

<sup>66</sup> Activity Design Document (ADD) for Anti-Corruption (AC), USAID/Bangladesh, Combating Corruption: Promoting Good Governance, Transparency and Integrity, p. 16 The relevant Office of Foreign Assistance indicators did not address impact or results.

<sup>67</sup> Eusuf and Associates. "Final Sub-Contract Report on Monitoring of Training Program and Outreach Events. Dhaka, December 2010.

These indicators were ample for measuring the inputs and reporting the data needed by USAID for reporting to Washington. They were practical and easy to measure – mostly counting attendance at events. The use of a third party for verification avoided any chance that PROGATI personnel could have simply manipulated the events to distort the level of effort.

### **C. Results Indicators**

The PMP was weak in this area, not only because not much was expected by USAID from the M&E part of the program, but also because of the need for operationalization of the concepts to be measured and which had not been worked out previously. Results indicators were measured by: 1) surveys, 2) key informant panels, and 3) follow-up interviews with participants. The most concise way to explain the issues is by indicator:

#### ***1. Perception of Corruption***<sup>68</sup>

In general, the public perception survey that would measure changes that might be perceived by the general public had several conceptual problems. These include:

- a. The period between the baseline and the proposed second measure in 2011 is too short for both the PROGATI effort to be completed and the changes to be projected to the public or for the public to experience a difference in governance.
- b. Many other intervening, uncontrollable variables could influence opinions. By uncontrollable, we mean that they are beyond PROGATI's management capability and also not statistically "controllable".
- c. Because of the sample size (the nation is the unit of analysis), there was no room for comparing geographic locations where PROGATI did or did not operate. For example, if the PROGATI program could be determined to only be operable in some districts and there were other similar districts that could be used for a control. But this would have required a larger sample size for a test of difference between districts. This sort of a quasi-experimental approach was not in the design.
- d. Similar to point two above, is the problem of the possible effect of the program itself and is typical of statistics on crime after an awareness program takes place. The population will have the perception that crime or corruption is more widespread than before because it is in the public eye, when in reality it may not have changed or may even have diminished.
- e. Another intervening variable, such as a major political event, the elections of 2008, can be illustrated using the *Daily Star* surveys<sup>69</sup> tracking the opinion of the population on similar variables. Since the new government has come to power four polls have been conducted. Generally, right after elections people are optimistic and give the new government the "benefit of the doubt." Then, with the passage of time, the opinion becomes more critical. The National Baseline Survey commission by PROGATI was conducted in April and May, shortly after the new government assumed power in January 2009. Thus the follow-up survey may in a misleading way show increased level of 'perceived' corruption even after all the initiatives of PROGATI.

### **Recommendation:**

Because of the problems listed above, conducting a 2011 survey is of dubious utility. It would be better to use the budget allocation for specific studies of the performance of one or more of the key government institutions that have been in operation for at least two years.

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<sup>68</sup> A C Nielsen & Associates, National Base Line Survey 2008, "Citizens' Perceptions and Knowledge of Corruption, SEP 2008. The field work was done in April and May after the January 2008 elections.

<sup>69</sup> The Daily Star Nielsen Rating of Performance of the Government in two years, 2010

## 2. Panel Surveys:

This type of survey brings in knowledgeable people from various sectors to study, under guidance and a discussion guide, plus questionnaire. They meet to discuss a theme, institution or organization. The answers to the questions can then be used to measure scales to rate the organization, theme or institution. It is a much more sophisticated and robust an approach than the usual focus group.

PROGATI, using International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) panel methodology, conducted baseline and follow-up surveys: The Media Sustainability Index (MSI)<sup>70</sup>; Assessing Parliament Capacity to Conduct Public Expenditure Oversight<sup>71</sup>; Citizens' Perceptions of the Media<sup>72</sup>; and Assessing Government Audit and Expenditure Control Capacity<sup>73</sup>.

These surveys had an important unintended aspect; they brought together people from different and sometimes competing organizations to discuss these subjects. This linkage at a personal level, in a controlled venue or neutral table, is a reflection of many of PROGATI's events that fostered discussion and fomented a collective interest in increased transparency and accountability. In the case of the media the discussion was the quality of the media among radio, television, print, reporters, editors and authors.

Coming back to the utility of the panel survey for the measurement of baselines and the measure of impact, typically twelve people were involved in each panel and with few exceptions none of the same people were invited back in subsequent years. Although the panel will provide an opinion on the scales that can be useful as an educated opinion, the comparative difference from year to year is questionable for two reasons: 1) the personalities are different from year to year; and 2) the statistical problem of the range of the scale (1 to 4 in these panels) and also the small sample size of 12.

Briefly, for two independent samples of 12 people the variation in their opinion can be quite large compared to the change in the average score. Hence, when one reads that the overall score changed from 2.22 to 2.17 (a 2.25% drop) one has to ask, "Is that because of measurement error?" That is just because a different set of evaluators did it, or is it a real difference and large enough to be called an impact because of training. Indeed, the scores on the 2010 MSI follow-up panel show a moderate decline. Was that due to the different personalities or had the industry slipped? We did not access the raw data to do a difference in means test, but given the small sample size and the small changes in the scales, there probably isn't a statistical difference.

As in the national perception survey, it is doubtful that the activities – workshops, training etc. – could change these sectors enough in one year to be perceptible. The unintended value of these panel surveys was probably in the exchange and linkage between the personalities and may have helped forge support for increased investigative journalism and more professional media services.

## Recommendation:

By all means convene these types of panels to gain perspectives and opinions on a given sector and to facilitate exchanges across areas of expertise, but do not ask that the technique provide the measurement of change in such a short time nor with statistical precision.

## 3. Follow-up Interviews:

Where the M&E system was much more appropriate for impact assessment was at the individual level. By a combination of initial assessments of individual skills, and follow-up by phone interviews,

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<sup>70</sup> PROGATI. The Media Sustainability Index. 2008, 2009, 2010. Dhaka

<sup>71</sup> PROGATI. Assessing Parliament Capacity to Conduct Public Expenditure Oversight -2010. Dhaka.

<sup>72</sup> PROGATI. Citizens' Perceptions of the Media., Dhaka

<sup>73</sup> PROGATI. Assessing Government Audit and Expenditure Control Capacity Dhaka

individual trainee application of skills learned was ascertained. Again, PROGATI correctly contracted specialists to apply questionnaires and to tabulate the information.

One of the key levels of impact that would indicate the implementation of what was learned in the training programs would be a change in the behavior functionaries and citizens. It was decided that three months after training interviewers would call each participant – not a sample – to ask what they had applied. The first sets of these interviews were not completed when this evaluation was conducted. The participants were from the BUPF UPs VGD program<sup>74</sup> and also the CAG district field personnel<sup>75</sup>. Oversight of the VGD program has been a major element of our civil society component through use of citizen scorecards and the social audit.

A major finding of the problem to be addressed was that Union Parishad Chairmen tend to be major sources of corruption - through nepotism (giving VGD cards to their family/friends), bribery (requiring payment for food aid) or by skimming off the top (keeping a percentage of the food for themselves and selling it on the local market. Thus PROGATI placed emphasis on VGD management in the BUPF training.

The initial (January and February 2011) survey results indicated that over 3/4s of the participants said that they made substantive changes in management of the UP, e.g., example, activating UP standing committees; budget transparency; procurement; VGD program transparency; and activating village courts. Other training modules that PROGATI plans to assess impact in this way include: Government Communication and Outreach; Promoting Transparency through Effective Government Communication; and Using Audit Reports for Investigative Journalism.

In the case of media component, PROGATI appropriately hired two full-time phone interviewers to follow-up on the people trained in media at JATRI. This phone follow-up was needed because the initial plan of having trainees mail in the questionnaires after six month periods did not work. The trainees did not complete and return the forms. The subject matter, finding a job in media or other job, is appropriate for short term impact. It is not a perception change but a test of the use of skills learned to gain appropriate employment. This technique was begun during the first semester of this year and results were not available to report.

### **Recommendation:**

The national perception surveys are better left to other organizations interested in tracking the subject. The intended follow-up survey should not be carried out because of the reasons stated above, i.e., impact or change could not be attributed to any changes that may be noted in the statistics.

## **D. Summary answers to SOW questions**

### **1. Do performance monitoring systems at all levels effectively measure program impact?**

No. The indicators and methods used only accurately account for the levels of process--training, events, material accomplishments. The impact in terms of results of the PROGATI purpose, have not been effectively measured.

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<sup>74</sup> "Training in "Transparency and Accountability in Union Parishad Resource Management"

<sup>75</sup> Training in "Documenting Cases of Fraud and Corruption"

**2. Are the indicators being used by USAID and the implementing partners meaningful? Why?**

The process indicators are meaningful, because they measure the execution of the planned activities, but the impact or results indicators cannot measure the changes that may be the result of the whole program for the reasons described above.

**3. Do indicators create perverse incentives for implementing partners? How?**

No, not in this case. The work plan was such that the hosting of a few massive events was not done instead of smaller events just for the sake of numbers.

**4. The latest 2009 CPI from Transparency International shows Bangladesh tied for 139 (with Belarus, Philippines, and Pakistan) out of 180 countries, a huge jump from previous years. How much, if any, of this improvement can be attributed to PROGATI efforts?**

This change at the end of only one year's effort on PROGATI's part, for all of the reasons described above, cannot be attributed to PROGATI.