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NEED AND THE NATION BUILDING : THE ROLE  
OF ADRA IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BY

JAMES PROUDFOOT

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**NGO AND THE NATION BUILDING : THE ROLE  
OF ADRA IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

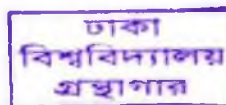


**GIFT**

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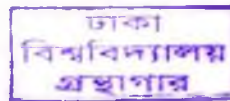
**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA  
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1997

Form 'A'

CERTIFIED that the work incorporated in thesis "NGO AND THE NATION BUILDING : THE ROLE OF ADRA IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT" submitted by James Prodip Adhikary was carried out by the candidate under my supervision-. Such material as has been obtained from other sources has been duly acknowledged in the thesis.

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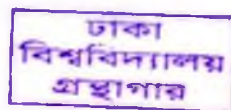
## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Any research work is strenuous and painstaking. It requires hard labour of the researcher under guidance of an expert on the topic. Virtually the research fellow has to find out source materials of the topic and depict it in form of a treatise. The research work has to be carried out through different stages step by step. It is a fact that while doing the research work one comes into contact with many persons in way of collection of materials and naturally the fellow remains indebted to these helpful persons. So is the case with me.

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My first and greatest indebtedness is to my supervisor Dr. Dalem Chandra Barman, Professor of Political Science Department of Dhaka University for his untiring and patient guidance in carrying out my research. I can humbly tell that without his great care, keen interest and deep insight into the subject matter it would not be possible for me to complete the present study. I must acknowledge the debts and gratitude to the Bangladesh Union Mission of Seventh-day-Adventist as well as Bangladesh Adventist Seminary and College Board for granting me two years scholarship from FED Bursurey fund.

I can see that I had to carry on my study in the midst of lot of troubles



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**ABSTRACT**

The thesis is a study of NGO and the Nation Building : The role of ADRA in socio-economic development of Bangladesh. The study focuses on the role of Non Government Organizations in the nation building activities and government policy towards nation-building involving the NGOs.

Analysing the study, answers of the following questions have been sought : (1) What is the meaning of Nation Building? (2) Difference between state building and Nation Building? (3) What are the problems of nation building in Bangladesh? (4) What are the linkages of Nation Building and Economic Development? (5) What is the state of NGOs in Bangladesh? (6) How many NGOs are working in Bangladesh? (7) What are the role played by the NGOs in Nation Building? (8) What is ADRA and what are the aims and objectives of ARDA? (9) What are the role played by ARDA in socio-economic development of Bangladesh? (10) What are the future vision of Non-Government Organizations and the Nation-Building in Bangladesh?

The thesis makes the observations that a rational approach based on priority basis should be followed in involving the NGOs to promote socio-economic development of the country, which should be fitted with infra-structural changes enabling the rural poor to have increased and effective participation in the Nation-Building activities including the process of decision-making and decision implementing.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

- ADRA - Adventist Development and Relief Agency
- BASC - Bangladesh Adventist Seminary & College
- CARE - Comparative American Relief Everywhere
- DTWs - Deep Tube-wells
- EIP - Early Implementation Project.
- FED - Far Eastern Division of Seventh-Day-Adventist
- FFYP - First Five Year Plan.
- GDP - Gross Domestic Products.
- HYV - High Yield Varieties
- IDA - International Development Agency.
- ILO - International Labour Organization.
- LLPs - Low Lift Pumps.
- NGOs - Non Governmental Organizations.
- SEYP - Second Five Year Plan.
- STWs - Shallow Tube-wells.
- SAWS - Seventh-Day-Adventist World Service.
- SAWS - Seventh-Day-Adventist Welfare Service.
- USAID - United States Agency for International Development.
- SIDA - Swedish International Development Agency.



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**CHAPTER : ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

Bangladesh is an overwhelmingly rural country. It has the fourth highest rural population in the world. Only China, Indonesia and India have larger absolute population but none of these has such a high portion of the total population living in rural areas with dependency on agriculture. The teeming million of this country however live in a beautiful lush green environment under severe physical and economic strains. They are very simple, ethnically homogeneous, speaking one language, hospitable to guests and demanding a minimum for life comfort.

Bangladesh is one of those countries however which has been receiving large quantities of foreign aid. Bangladesh gets approximately 1.5 billion of aid every year and the accounts for nearly 50 percent of its total revenue budget, 80 percent of its development budget and 10 percent of the Gross National Products. Aid is given to Bangladesh expressly for the purpose of alleviating poverty and strengthening the economy. But it is surprising that poverty has been increasing day by day with increase of foreign aid. A number of national and foreign NGOs are working in Bangladesh for its socio-economic development. But foreign aid and NGOs has failed to alleviate poverty in rural Bangladesh.

This study is an attempt to analyse these questions : (1) What are the meaning of nation building? (2) What are the differences between state

building and nation-building? (3) What are the problems of nation-building in Bangladesh? (4) What are the linkages of nation-building and economic development? (5) What is the state of NGOs in Bangladesh? (6) How many NGOs are working in Bangladesh? (7) What are the role played by the NGOs in nation-building? (8) What is ADRA and what is the role played by ADRA in socio-economic development? (9) What is the future vision of Non-Governmental Organization and Nation-Building in Bangladesh?

Socio-economic development is the primary object of the NGOs in Bangladesh. It aims at satisfying the basic needs of the people, such as - food, clothing, shelter, education, social security, medical facilities, recreational facilities and so on. Most of the NGOs in Bangladesh are working to alleviate rural poverty.

This study seeks to analyze the role of NGOs in the socio-economic development. Do the NGOs take part in nation-building activities? In what way and how? What are the important components of nation-building and are the NGOs involved themselves in those activities?

In the study I have followed the analytical statistical methods. I have also taken help from secondary sources, i.e. documents and other writings of different authors. I have also collected information from newspaper reporting, government documents and publications. Finally I have also made a field

work in the rural area undertaken by Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

The study is divided into eight chapter. The introductory chapter opens the discussion about the background of the present study. In the second chapter concept of nation building has been discussed. Chapter three has focused on the economic development and nation building. Chapter four examines where do the poor stand in the process of nation building. Chapter five analyses the nature of NGOs in Bangladesh. Chapter six probes about the origin, aims and objectives of ARDA — Adventist Development and Relief Agency. The seven chapter analyses the socio-economic study of the women's development Project of ARDA, Modhupur, Tangail and comes up with some observations. Chapter eight deals with the conclusion.

**CHAPTER : TWO**

**CONCEPT OF NATION BUILDING:THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Nation building, as defined by Esman is “the deliberate fashioning of integrated political community with fixed geographical boundaries in which the nation state is the dominant political institution”<sup>1</sup>. It is thus process that involves a five fold task of “the establishment of a national authority, creation of a sense of territorial nationality, elimination of mass-elite gap, creation of a minimum value consensus and building of integrative institutions”<sup>2</sup>.

Nation building as a concept has assumed prominence as well as a new dimension following the changes and shifts in the past world war II era. It has since been a subject of crucial concern in political development. The term “nation building” is most often used interchangeably with “national integration”<sup>3</sup>. National Integration generally implies bringing together the disparate elements of a society into a more integrated whole, or to make out of many small and diverse societies a closer approximation of one nation<sup>4</sup>.

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1. Milton J. Esman “the Politics of Development Administration” in J. D. Montgomery and W. J. Siffin (ed); Approches to the Development : Political Administration and changes, (New York : M. Graw-Hill, 1966) pp 59-60.

2. Myron Weiner, “Political Integration and Political Development”, : The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol CCC VIII, March, 1965, pp 52-64.

3. Rounaq Jahan, Pakistan : Failure in National Integration, (Oxford University Press, Bangladesh edition, 1993) p. 3.

4. Howard Wriggins, “National Integration” in Myron Weiner (ed) Mordernization : The Dynamics of Growth, (New York, Basic Books Inc. Publishers, 1966) pp 181-191.

Nation building is now widely used to cover an extraordinarily wide range of physical, social, economical and political phenomena also. Theoretically the term has been interpreted in architectural and mechanical sense. “As a house can be built from timber, bricks and materials in different patterns, quickly or slowly, through different sequences of assembly, in partial independence from its setting and according to the choice, will and power of its builders, so a nation can be built according to different plans from various materials rapidly or gradually by different sequences of steps and in partial independence from its environment”<sup>5</sup>. Thus the components, design, shape, speed and process involved in building a nation reflect the specific conditions obtained in a particular time period. They also depend upon the content and quantity of resources, both human and non-human and their psycho-social composition.

The term ‘nation-building’ thus covers a vast range of human relationship, attitudes, activities and social processes : the integration of diverse and desecrate cultural loyalties and development of a sense of nationality; the integration of political units into a common territorial framework with a government which can exercise authority; the integration of the rulers and the ruled, the integration of the citizen and various social

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5. Karl W. Deutsch and W. J. Foltz, (ed) National Building, (New York, Atherton Press, 1963) pp 181-191.



groups into a common political process; and finally the integration of individuals into organisations for purposive activities. It may be noted here that nation building is sometimes used synonymously with 'State-building' also. The two terms are however, different from each other in the sense that while state building implies the creation and consolidation of authority and emphasizes on the role of government in the social process, nation building calls for dispersal of powers and stresses on responsiveness and participation<sup>6</sup>. In fact the two are potentially complementary to each other while nation building in essence has wider connotation compared to state building.

The problems of nation building are not only related to the new states of Asia and Africa, several European states also faced and even now are facing analogous problems<sup>7</sup>, although there are important differences between the two. In developed countries, where there is pre-existent, well-formed national ideology, a national elite and national institutes, the problem essentially is one of integrating one or more alienated groups into the already existing system. In the developing countries, on the other hand, there is after no such pre-existing "Sovereign" system and the task of nation building is

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6. Rounak Jahan, Pakistan : Failure in National Integration . . . . . op. cit, p. 3.

7. Nazrul Islam, The Politics of National Integration in New States : A comparative study of Pakistan and Malaysia (1957-1970). unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Griffith University, Australia, 1984, p. 15.

thus two-fold : first to create a national ideology, a national elite and national institutions, second, to integrate, the various groups into the newly created national system<sup>8</sup>.

As many states in the Third World are made up of diverse regional groups or nationalities which do not necessarily give their first loyalty to the nation state, the very process of nation building after leads to severe political conflicts. Nation building, in these countries, these states to a large extent, to the relationship between a central government and regional groups or nationalities<sup>9</sup>. Recent theories on nation building have made use of this relationship in the framework of the centre-periphery model. One of them points out that both the process — internal consolidation and external linkages — can be explored with the help of these centre-periphery concepts<sup>10</sup>.

It would be possible to identify two main features of the existing theories of nation building. Firstly, the term has been used in a very wide and loose fashion to suggest different meanings to different people at different times.

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8. Rounsq Jahan, Pakistan : Failure in National Integration, ..... op. cit, p.3.

9. Kristern Westgard, "The States : Some Theoretical Issues" The Journal of Social Studies. No 13, July 1981, p. 13.

10. Rajni Kothari, "State and Nation Building in the Third World" in Kothari (ed) State and Nation Building A Third World Perspective. (New Delhi, Allied Publishers Private Ltd, 1976) p. 11.

And secondly, from operational perspective, one or other specific aspect of the problem has been emphasized indicating that there may be different ways of nation building. The main reason for this dialectic is that every nation is the creation of its own history which is in turn influenced by a host of factors that are similar only by name but divergent in content culture, religion, language, social values and norms, politico-economic indicators and behaviours, all are essential inputs to the nation building process. But these are so diverse from case to case that there can hardly be any single blue-print of nation building. As we have pointed out earlier, many states in the Third World are made of different nationalities and there exist differences in ethnicity, language, race, caste, assumed blood ties, customs and territory. So, after the attainment of independence, many of these states face the problem of alienation of one or more nationality groups from the countries political system. The main problem of nation building in these countries is how to maintain the unity and stability of the new political system and to create a cohesive society from the discrete groups linked by the system. Even in case, where divergence in ethnicity, language, religion and culture are not acute, the problems of nation building do remain. Nation building in those states of Asia and Africa is further complicated by the fact that in addition to ensuring national integration, these states have to face the challenge of socio-economic upliftment which suffered tremendous set back during the

pre-independence period. Before independence, the heterogeneous socio-political groups were united for a single cause of national liberation. Divergent group interest and orientation were then swayed by the wave of the common cause. When after independence, the nationalist leader faced the specific task of dealing with the welter of socio-politico economic issues they found the process of self-transformation from the status of leader of movement to those of nation-building, much more challenging.

### **DEFINING NATION-BUILDING IN BANGLADESH**

It will appear from the foregoing analysis that 'territorial nationality', 'establishment of a national central authority', 'creation of value consensus', 'the establishment of integrative institutions for continued socio-politico-economic development' are integrates to nation building. A host of physical social, political cultural and economic factors are associated with the nation building process. In order to define nation building in the context of Bangladesh it is necessary to make a review of the socio-demographic profile of the country.

In general terms, the socio-demographic features of Bangladesh are akin to those found in most other new nations of Asia and Africa. Despite these commonalities, Bangladesh stands out almost strikingly with its ethnic,

linguistic and cultural homogeneity in the comity of the 'nations in hope'<sup>11</sup>. All but only two percent of the population are ethnic Bangla. "Bangla" is not only the universal mother tongue here but also historically a dominant source of strength of nationalism. The miniature peripheral ethno-linguistic and cultural groups live in tribal areas. To be fair, there has been some degree of tribal descent which continues to be a cause of concern, particularly the situation in Chittagong Hill tract may continue to demand special attention in the task of nation-building<sup>12</sup>. The usual deprived psychosis of any minority community coupled with geographical location where these minorities inhabit accounts for this. What shape the problem will take in the future would depend not only on the way the Dhaka government would handle it but also on its international dimension<sup>13</sup>. However it may be argued that the problem does not by any calculation sum to pose any really substantive threat to Bangladesh from the point of view of national integration.

Religion is another source of potential cleavage in Bangladesh. With

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11. Rupert Emerson, From Empire to Nation, (Harvard University Press) Cambridge, Mass, 1959, p. 94.

12. Robber (Bengali Weekly) Dhaka, May 26, 1985.

13. Talukdar Moniruzzaman, Group Interest and Political Changes : Studies of Pakistan and Bangladesh, (New Delhi, South Asia Publishers, 1982) p. 219.

about 12 percent<sup>14</sup> of the total population, the Hindu form the largest minority group in the country. Although they are all ethnic Bengalees, religious differences have historically been the source of separate social and electoral identity<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, there is the legacy of age-old mutual distrust between the Muslims and Hindus which holds the potential of playing “a dysfunctional role in the nation building process”<sup>16</sup>. In the post-1971 Bangladesh however, the distrust has remained within limits and no recurrence to violence between the two communities has been observed. Moreover, although they are the large minority compared to the tribal, the Hindus have never organised any dissident movement. The most important cause was the general environment of moderation, amity and harmony in which different religious communities live in Bangladesh. This environment was again the product of the prevailing sense of nationalism found among all communities. Moreover, unlike the tribal, the Hindu population is dispersed all over the country rendering organisation of dissident movement less viable. Regarding the prospect of any regional disparity fostering inter regional

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14. The share of Hindu community in the total population of Bangladesh was 33% in 1901, 28% in 1941, 22% in 1951, 18.5% in 1961, 13.5% in 1974 which came down to 12.1% in 1982. See Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh 1982. p. 91.

15. Rounak Jahan, Bangladesh Politics : Problems and Issues, (Dhaka : University Press Ltd, 1980) p. 161-62.

16. Talukdar Moniruzzaman, Group Interest . . . . . op. cit. p. 217.

hostility in the country, there is also hardly any threat to the integrate status of Bangladesh. There has indeed been some uneven regional growth between the Northwestern (Rajshahi and Khulna) and Eastern (Dhaka and Chittagong) regions in favour of the later. This has however, been the result more of geo-economic realities including nearness to the seat of government and existing industrial base, letter communication and a letter transport system, than any deliberate government policy of inter-regional discrimination. The country's geographical contiguity, linguistic and cultural identity, common history, intra-regional mobility are likely to keep prospect of inter-regional hostility below the mark.

It would be clear then that problems of national integration understood from religious, cultural, linguistic and regional perspectives are of peripheral significance for nation building in Bangladesh. The crucial elements here, include creation of value consensus and establishment of integrative institutions and establishment of vialble national authority. From such a perspective, although the country near homogeneity in ethnic linguistic, cultural and even religious terms renders its nation building problems simpler, in reality they are of extremely delicate nature. Nation building here as a functional concept has to be perceived as the locality of a continuous and endless process through which the country by holding a national value consensus over arching the values and expectations of different sections of

the society, would so develop as a cohesive socio-politico economic entity that it would continuously inspire maximum allegiance of its constitutions, would strengthen itself from their strength mobilized concertive participation<sup>17</sup>.

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17. Iftekharuzzaman and Mahbubur Rahman, "Nation Building in Bangladesh : Perceptions, problems and an aproach," in M. Abdul Hafiz and Abdur Rob Khan (ed) Nation building in Bangladesh : restrospect and prospect, Dhaka, BIISS 1986. p. 17.



**CHAPTER : THREE**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NATION BUILDING**

Economic development and nation building are inseparable when the former is seen as a self generating process of mobilizing the available human and material resources. Development is both a process and a goal. The imperatives of development require that every individual group as well as class belongs self-developed entities, is a prospering "nation" geared through the process of self-assertion. There is perhaps no short-cut to this process.

Development strategies, conceived elsewhere, borrowed and then practiced in the poor societies hardly provide scope of 'going through the process' for the majority. If the nation is to be built in which economic development will play an instrumental role, there is no alternative but to initiate a self-generating economic system based on development of all available local resources. A nation must learn how to survive with the locally available resources in the first instance. Till then, no amount of foreign aid can bail the nation out for long. These arguments have been developed around the case of Bangladesh — a typically least developed country with typical magnitude of population and an example of unsuccessful experiments with pre-dominantly aid-dependent development models.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NATION BUILDING LINKAGES**

The western development strategies have certain important bearings on the development process of the Third World Societies. The facts that the social, political and economic factors are mutually interacting and hardly receive due recognition resulting poor performance in development efforts. The problem of poverty, political and economic under-development in the developing countries like Bangladesh are such that they defy economic and political solutions in isolation.

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The most harmful long-term effects of borrowed development concepts and strategies is the damage inflicted on institution building. The western development strategies tends to undermine such viable institutions as extended family net-works, patronage ties, clan, tribal loyalties, corporate group linkages, churches and religious movements and the like. And by undermining and eliminating efforts helped to destroy some of the vital agencies in many of the Third World Nations.

The limitations of the prevailing social sciences have led to rethinking of the development models. This rethinking of development looks at local resources, technology and institutions as essential elements of the development process. More importantly, such rethinking has envisaged many models suited to the local conditions. For example, India's caste system,

Africa's tribalism, corporatism and interpersonal solidarity in Japan, blending of Maoism and Confucianism in China, all are considered to be instrumental in the overall development process. Once development has been put into its right place in the Third World context, its linkage with nation building becomes obvious. Most of the Third World societies are "nations in hope" rather than "nation in being"<sup>1</sup>. For one, the colonial legacies left most of these countries with heterogeneous social, religious, ethnic and linguistic groups within, at least initially artificial boundaries and "territorial nationalism" was very slowest emerge. When there is relative ethnic, religious or linguistic homogeneity, other forms of cleavages social, economic and political have prevented the growth of national cohesion.

The things that are at stake from the perspective of these individual classes or groups are economic survival. In such a perception, nation-building becomes the most formidable social engineering task. Any policy, economic or political is evaluated by individual groups in terms of the above stakes. In particular, the economic programmes play a decisive role as typically exemplified by the 23 years of Pakistan experience. Each group or class has its own way of life, traditions and values. If development strategies can accommodate these elements, maximum participation can be ensured.

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1. Rupert emerson, *From Empire to Nation* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1959) p. 94.

Thus bringing the diverse elements of polity within the mainstream, economic life may very effectively cement the bond of nation hood.

This is also true for a society where bulk of the population live below the poverty line. The situation of Bangladesh is a case in point where the critical areas of economic development that provide useful linkage with nation-building are (a) absolute and relative poverty, (b) unequal access to productive means as well as opportunities, (c) lack of mobilization and development of indigenous resources and (d) lack of participation in development process. The development strategies pursued in the past may be reviewed in the light of these indicators. Before that we asses the resources, potentials of Bangladesh in point of mobilization of local resources for development.

External resources inflow has in fact been the anchorsheet of all economic activities in the country since the immediate post independence days when with its inherited state of external dependence<sup>2</sup>, the country faced its enormous task of reconstruction of the war-ravaged economy. Development activities in almost every sector of the economy in subsequent years have been banking primarily on foreign aid. Bangladesh has been the

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2. Rehman Sobhan, Crisis of External Dependence : Political Economy and External Aid to Bangladesh, UPL, Dhaka, 1982.

recipient of large amount of international economic assistance on average at a rate of US \$ 1.2-1.5 billion per year<sup>3</sup>.

### STRATEGIES AND TRENDS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Before 1947, excepting for a few commodities like cotton, oil seeds and some manufactures, most of the goods required by the people of Bangladesh for their consumption were produced by the rural people themselves. Rice grown here was more than sufficient to meet the consumption requirements of the people. In the early years of Pakistan the peasant cultivates who tilled their lands with their own draught animals, tools and implements continued to function without any development assistance from the Government, as the British colonial period. Government investment in rural infrastructure and land improvement was minimum. Land productivity therefore did not go up. Agricultural productivity however grew at an annual rate of one percent mainly through the increase in labour inputs consequent on population growth. Fluctuations were there due to natural calamities but since the supply did not fall appreciably below the food requirements, stability in food price could be maintained without resort to import of food. Some industrial expansion took place in processing activities and the growing consumer goods industries in Pakistan were beginning to

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3. Collected from Ministry of Finance, External Resources Division.

find markets in Bangladesh in the 1950s. By the end of the decade, however, Bangladesh had already become dependent on food grain import to meet the consumption needs of her increasing population. The earning from raw jute were more or less stagnant while the need for increasing imports for agriculture and mainly in non-agricultural sector increased fast for maintaining economic stability in the country. On the whole, it may be said that food situation, poverty, income distribution pattern all just began to deteriorate in 1950s.

In the sixties significant structural changes took place in the top echelons of the economy of Bangladesh. The second Five Year Plan of Pakistan was launched in 1960 whereby a systematic attempt was first initiated to raise productivity. The new ruling regime was comprised of the civil-military bureaucracy, big business group who mostly represented the vested interest of the West Pakistan feudal and bourgeois classes. Such composition of the ruling group, this inclusion in the US-sponsored military alliance and dependence on foreign aid, particularly military and economic, had predetermined its economic development strategy. The Government adopted three types of policy measures. First, to obtain surplus for capital formation in a situation of underdeveloped agriculture and narrow tax base. Agriculture was called upon to generate surplus for non-agricultural development. The second element of the strategy of the government was to

protect the emerging capitalist class from foreign competition and allow it to concentrate its efforts of industrialization in the most profitable consumer good industries. This was done through direct control of foreign trade and foreign exchange rates. The third element was the direct involvement of the state in the economy as a producer.

A question may be raised as to what went wrong with the development strategies of the sixties. The period of chronic political instability of the 1950s was followed by a period of a political calm brought about by the military regime of Ayub Khan. Such an environment, later on given a populist image by Basic Democracies (indirect representative government) suited the needs of Harvard model of growth-based development strategy. In such politico-economic environment, the majority were deprived of the right to economical and political participation as economic opportunities mainly bestowed upon by the Government were open to a few. In particular economic alienation and deprivation gave rise to grave concern among the people of Bangladesh about their survival and self-determination.

The post-independence period witnessed the short-term but colossal task of rehabilitation and reconstruction to bring the economy back to the 1969-70 level and the long-term task of building a viable economic system amidst resource scarcity and a fast growing population. The destruction and



dislocation of the economy brought about a sharp fall in the flow of goods and services within the country. GNP declined by about 94% between 1969-70 and 1972-73. The economic recovery following the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war ravaged economy enabled Bangladesh to attain an average growth rate of more than 7% in the seventies. However, different sectors of the economy were unable to attain a uniform pattern of growth in this decade. In particular, agricultural production suffered the most following a number of spells of natural calamities and also frequent changes in agricultural development strategy, specially in input pricing and distribution policies. Allocation for agricultural development as percentage of total expenditure went down over the decade<sup>4</sup>. The share of industry and power sectors have in recent years gone up while those had remained more or less constant in the cases of physical and social infrastructure sectors until 1977-78 after which there was significant decline in their shares of expenditure<sup>5</sup>.

On the whole, the economic indicators relevant for nation building experienced deterioration. The percentage of below poverty population, landless and unemployed increased significantly. Disparity in income

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4. Mosharraf Hossain and Ashrafuddin Choudhury, "Development in Bangladesh Economy — An Analysis of the experiences of the sixties and seventies" — The Journal of Social Studies, Dhaka, No. 12, April 1981, p. 36.

5. Ibid.

distribution and ownership of and access to productive means including land also widened. All these happened despite the fact that good number of populist and participatory programmers in the rural areas including the IRDP, Swanirvar programme, Cannel digging Gram Sarker (village self-governing local body) programme were initiated under the succeeding regimes. At NGOs level also many experimental programmes of participatory character were undertaken. The fact of the matter is that although these programmes were undertaken in the name of the poor mass, only few, the elite and fortunate ones had the decision making and participating role in the implementation and other stages. The employment opportunities for the poor also expanded to some extent in the rural areas. But for all practical purpose, these populist programmes widened the gap between the rulers and the ruled because of the domination of elite and sub-elite in the hierarchy.

An analysis of the Annual Development Programme of the last few years shows that a number of development projects has been undertaken before careful scrutiny and approved by the planning commission<sup>6</sup>. Even in 1980-81 budget, only 27% of the total projects in the ADP had been examined and approved by the planning commission. In 1977-78, only 62% of the project under implementation had finally obtained approval<sup>7</sup>. Since

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6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

most of the important development projects were dependent on foreign assistance the slow disbursement performance of aid acted as bottleneck in the way of their quick completion.

Given the preparation of foreign aid in development programmes some issues in foreign aid utilization may be worth pointing out. Perhaps Bangladesh has no alternative to depending on foreign aid at least in the foreseeable future. But the point is, foreign aid cannot be substituted for local resources. We must start with whatever resources and manpower we have. It is only when we have charted a path and have defined our own long-term goals of national self-development that foreign aid should be utilized as complementing to local resources. It may sound idealistic and impracticable. But can there be any doubt that we may expect to obtain more aid and on favourable terms only when we have started a self-generating process by ourselves ? In the absence of it, foreign aid perpetuates more aid dependency and the long term consequences cannot be good for any nation, not for nation-building.

**CHAPTER : FOUR**

**WHERE DO THE POOR STAND IN THE PROCESS OF NATION BUILDING**

Despite decades of much publicized 'development' efforts, many of the trends evident in Bangladesh today are matters of deep concern. The most disturbing feature is the fact that the situation of millions of people is worsening rather than improving. Hunger, malnutrition poverty and unemployment are increasing in both absolute and relative terms.

This has been made possible due to the exclusion of the majority of the people from the process of development. They have been forced out of the political and economic process by a handful of ruling elite mainly due to the fear that once the real producers are incorporated into these process, their dominance and lootpat will be severely eroded. The net result has been a narrow-based aid dependent development paradigm, that can at best alienate most people from the act of production.

### **DEFINATION OF POVERTY**

The definition of poverty is very relevant though subjective in nature. The real problem is Analysing poverty refers to scarcity or insufficiency of resources in some sections of the population and in some areas, an area which lacks the means to eradicate its own poverty.

The most difficult task is to define absolute poverty. In this respect two criteria are available in the existing poverty literature maximum needs and

acceptable needs. The second approach developed mainly by UN and ILO experts - poverty in terms of lack of basic human needs. Drawanski and Scott draw up an hierarchically arranged list of such need.

### **Basic physical needs**

1. Food (Nutrition)
2. Shelter
3. Clothing
4. Health

### **Basic cultural needs**

1. Education
2. Leisure and recreation
3. Security

### **Higher needs**

1. Surplus income
2. Peoples participation in development agencies.

While describing poverty in Bangladesh Khan (1970-80) lists the following as "core basic need", food, clothing, shelter, health, education, drinking water and acceptable per capita requirement of each of these items. For him the cost of these basic needs constitute the poverty line<sup>1</sup>.

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1. A. R. Khan, "Basic need Target : An Illustrative Exercise in Identification and Qualification" in D. P. Ghai, The Basic needs approach to development, Geneva, ILO, 1977.

Poverty means an unequal distribution of property in a broader sense, it also means an unequal distribution of power. People are poverty stricken when their income, even if it is adequate for survival but falls markedly below that of the community. Then they cannot have what the larger community regards as the minimum necessary for decent living.

Poverty is both an absolute and relative term. In an absolute sense, it means lack of resources for specific needs. In a relative sense, it refers to the extent of these resources in comparison to what individuals in the society have. A poor urban family today may have technological possessions and education superior even to those of the upper socio-economic groups in rural areas.

### PER CAPITA INCOME

The dimension of poverty in Bangladesh is reflected in many ways. The average per-capita income is very low and that is very unevenly distributed in society. In World Bank Atlas, Bangladesh was placed second from the bottom, just above Bhutan on the basis of per-capita income i.e., in Bangladesh \$ 90 in 1975. In 1978, it was sixth from the bottom, the other five were Bhutan, Ethiopia, Laos, Mali and Ruanda<sup>2</sup>. Even during 1981-82

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2. Emajuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh : Rajniti Goti Prokriya O Onanya Probandha (Bangladesh : nature and dynamic of Politics and other essays) Dhaka, Book Society, 1982 pp. 113-15.

the per-capita income remained stationary at \$ 126. The government of Bangladesh has recognized an income of \$ 100 as the poverty line and according to government estimate 80 percent of the total population is living below the poverty line. Per-capita income during 1984-85 was \$ 160.

### FOOD (NUTRITION)

Since per-capita income is not seriously taken as the indicator of poverty these days, for as the indicator of poverty these days, for a real picture of poverty, we can take a look at the daily food basket. In Bangladesh it consists of 8 ounces of rice, 2 ounces of fish or meat, 1 ounce of rice, 2 ounces of fish or meat, 1 ounce of pulse and some vegetables. A household which can arrange such food by its income is lucky; though such food has never been considered balanced and not at all adequate for health and energy. In Bangladesh however more than 85 percent of the rural households fail to arrange such food regularly throughout the year<sup>3</sup>. A national Nutrition survey, undertaken in 1962-64, indicated that at least 45 percent of all rural households had calorie in -takes below the acceptable levels<sup>4</sup>. The second

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3. Emajuddin Ahmed and Saaduddin, "Bangladesh : Rural Poverty and Foreign Aid". Journal of Social Studies, Vol. 25, 1984, C. S. S. Dhaka University, p, 36.

4. Quoted in Stefan deVylder and Senial Asplund, Contradiction and distribution in a rural economy, The case of Bangladesh, SIDA, May 1979, p. 7.



nutrition survey undertaken in 1976, showed that average daily energy intake becomes 150 calories less in 1976 than in 1962-64. The survey further indicated that a food basket of an average Bengali household could generate only 2094 calories which was 7 percent less than the minimum requirement. In the poor families, it was less. In fact, the average daily intake in 59 percent of 5 rural households does not exceed 1500 calories<sup>5</sup>. The UN statistic also revealed that Bangladesh had in the early 1970s the lowest average intake per head, among the twelve developing countries in Asia<sup>6</sup>. The situation has worsened in the early 1980s.

Out of the total population, more than 85 percent live below the poverty line, more than 60 percent take less than the minimum calories requirement, 67 percent suffer from protein deficiencies and more than 70 percent are suffering from anaemia<sup>7</sup>.

The average life expectancy is only 47 years. In a survey conducted by some scholars in the two Union Parishads, i.e., Chander Kandi and Monipur, it was found that 23 percent of villagers in those two Unions comprising 30

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5. Emajuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh : Rajniti Goti Prokriya O Onanya Probandha, . . . . . op. cit. p. 113.

6. FAO/UNDP Government of Bangladesh Agricultural Mission Nutrition Working Paper III, Dhaka, 1977.

7. Emajuddin Ahmed and Saaduddin. . . . . op. cit. p. 37.

villages could afford to eat meat only 12 days in that year and 11 percent of them could eat meat on Eid days<sup>8</sup>. The worst sufferers are in fact the children who are the future of the nation. 82 percent of them do not have the minimum hemoglobin in their blood, 25 percent of all children are seriously malnourished and 50 percent of them are moderately undernourished. Approximately 50,000 children become blind due to lack of vitamin A<sup>9</sup>. The rate of infant mortality is 140 per 1000 live births and one in every four dies before age of 5<sup>10</sup>.

### CLOTHING

While the nutritional level is alarming, poverty in terms of clothing is really shameful. In Bangladesh, per capita consumption of cloth is nearly seven yards<sup>11</sup>, only a pair of Lungi, a shirt or a T shirt and a pair of gamcha (long napkin) are what an adult male use through the year. An average Bengali woman can afford to use only one Sari and she wears that in most cases without pattice and a blouse. In warm weather, cloths are not indispensable for bare survival, but what is needed for a moderately decent

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8. Emajuddin Ahmed and Saaduddin. . . . . op.cit p.37.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, Bureau of Statistic, Statistical Year book of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1979,p.468.

living is beyond the means of not less than 45 percent to 47 percent of the total population in rural areas; 55 percent of the children of 5 years of age and below never gets new cloths<sup>12</sup>.

### HOUSING

In rural Bangladesh dwelling of an average Bangladeshi consists of a few thatched hutment made of bamboo sticks and diverse dry straw and grass. Some of these may have mud wall but the floor is in more than 90 percent cases earthen. This huts may last for 3 to 4 years. The members do the cooking either in an open space beside the huts or in an improved kitchen of the roof with or without walls. The dried up leaves or stalks of plants or herb are generally used as fuel in more than 85 percent household. A number of Chouki or Khatias (rope woven beds) earthen cooking materials and pitchers, a few plates generally of aluminium and other agriculture implements are what an average household have. They do not have tube-well or other source of pure drinking water near them and almost all of have no electricity<sup>13</sup>.

Poverty is a culture bound concept. The people who lack education and skill, who have bad health, poor housing, low level of aspirations and

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12. Emajuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh: Rajnitr . . . . . op. cit., p. 115.

13. Emajuddin Ahmed and Saaduddin. . . . . op.cit p.37.

high level of mental distress — they are poor. They are, in the language of sociology, multi-problem families. The intensity of poverty is equally felt in the towns and cities. In 1980 in Dhaka city itself 7 percent of the inhabitants had to go to bed without supper and about 11 percent of them were not sure whether they could eat that night<sup>14</sup>. The severity of poverty is however more intense in the village than in towns and that is mainly due to the existing socio-economic structure in Bangladesh.

### HEALTH

For most people, there is a complete lack of public health services. The total number of Physicians and Dentist has been lower these days than in 1961. The planning commission itself acknowledged such pathetic conditions of rural areas, where there is almost a total absence of health facilities<sup>15</sup>. The health of the poor has sharply deteriorated over the years.

### EDUCATION

About 80 percent of the total population in the rural areas are illiterate. What is unbelievably true that the absolute number of illiterate

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14. Emajuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh: Rajniti . . . . . op. cit., p.116.

15. The Government of the peoples Republic of Bangladesh, planning Commission, The First Five Year plan 1973-78, Dhaka, 1978, p. 448.

persons in the countries and literacy programmes have very little impact on the rural population. In the villages education is spreading but that is mainly for the upper landholding classes<sup>16</sup>. The picture of the female education is still more dismal.

The economy of Bangladesh is agro-based 91 percent of the population live in rural areas. The source of income of the rural people is land and farming. There is twenty five million acres of cultivable land for 110 million people live in rural areas and the development of rural areas means development of agriculture. Land is the most important source of employment and income in rural areas. It also represents both economic and social status. But land ownership is very unevenly distributed<sup>17</sup>.

Water is the most important resource and the poor households have very limited access to it, though access to water determines to a large extent the cropping intensity and agricultural productivity. The most important assets of Bangladesh are its land, manpower and water. Rice output per

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16. Shamina Sultana, The Foreign Aid and Rural Development in Bangladesh. unpublished M. Phil. Thesis, Dhaka University, 1985, p. 24.

17. Ibid.

capita in Bangladesh is only one quarter of that of Japan despite the fact that the soil and climate of Bangladesh are more favourable<sup>18</sup>.

Woman folk constitute almost 50 percent of the total population and their role in the production and income generating activities are significant. A study of the activities in the society and the nature of its underdevelopment will remain incomplete without reference to the role and status of the women. In rural areas early marriage is common, even the women get married when they are not even 10 years old. These women get divorced and subsequently remarried. The reason for such divorces lies in poverty.

It is therefore suggested that the socio-economic order that has excluded the poor in the past from sharing in development has to give way gradually to a newly ordered system based on opportunities for increasing productivity and income but chiefly on social power and freedom from a high degree of dependency for survival. It must be recognized that in order to ensure mass participation in the process of development, the producers must also be made the consumers<sup>19</sup>.

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18. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Development Strategy for Bangladesh. Dhaka, Centre for Social Studies, 1980, p. 5.

19. Quoted in M. Abdul Hafiz and Abdur Rob Khan (ed), Nation Building in Bangladesh. Dhaka, BISS, 1986, p. 137.

The rural poor should be enabled to participate in the development by:

- i) sharing in economic power through increased access to productive assets;
- ii) sharing in socio-political power by taking part in decision making through organisations of their own choice;
- iii) having incentives to contribute to increasing production through institutional organizational arrangements;
- iv) sharing in opportunities for rewards and benefits of growth to improve their nutrition, productive skills and human abilities and to exchange their labour and production to meet essential needs<sup>20</sup>.

Once participation in the above sense can be ensured, the process of nation building will automatically be meaningful. However, this process requires challenging organizational efforts involving the beneficiaries of such processes.

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20. Ibid.

**CHAPTER : FIVE**  
**NATURE OF NGOs IN BANGLADESH**



Nation building as defined by Esman is "the deliberate fashioning of integrated political community with fixed geographical boundaries in which the nation state is the dominant political institution"<sup>1</sup>. The process of nation building involves a five fold task of "the establishment of a national authority, creation of a sense of territorial nationality, elimination of the mass-elite gap, creation of a minimum value consensus and building of integrative institutions"<sup>2</sup>. In this process, socio-economic development is a very important component where NGOs have been playing a major role.

### WHAT IS NGO

The word "NGO" means such an organisation which has been organised by personal efforts, which is not a part of the state. There may be similarities and distinction between the aims and object of the government and NGOs. According to Padron, "NGOs can be a research oriented organisation, organisations of the professionals, labour organisation, religious institutions, Chamber of Commerce, Youth organisation, association of the elder citizens, organisation of the tourist, national and international

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1. Milton J. Esman "the Politics of Development Administration" in J. D. Montgomery and W. J. Siffin (ed.); Approaches to the development : Political Administration and Changes (New York : M. Graw - Hill, 1966) pp 59-60.

2. Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development" : the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. CCCVIII, March 1965, pp 52-64.

donor or development organisation and such other organisation which is non-governmental in nature"<sup>3</sup>.

There may be different types of NGOs- national and international. Regional NGOs can be national or grass-root level. On the other hand, the international NGOs can be donor agency or an organisation which is engaged with the implementation of projects. Its nature can be secular or religious.

In 1974, the General Conference Executive committee voted to register the Seventh-day-Adventist church with the United Nation as an official non-governmental organisations (NGO)<sup>4</sup>.

From 1971, a number of voluntary organisations, both foreign and national came forward with helping hands to support government efforts to rehabilitate the war affected people of Bangladesh. Although initially these voluntary organisations participated in the relief and rehabilitation works, gradually they started involving themselves in other areas of development activities. They are now involve in health education, family- planning, agriculture and other socio-economic development activities.

Until 1978, there was no set rules to co-ordinate and monitor the

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3. Padron Mario, "Non Governmental Development Organizations : From Development Aid to Development Co-operation", World Development Vol. 15, Supplement, 1987, Oxford, p. 70

4. Adventist Review, World Edition, Washington, April 1996. p. 7.

activities of the voluntary organisation when the Foreign Donation Regulation ordinance was promulgated<sup>5</sup>. This Ordinance was further amended in 1982.

The Foreign Regulation Ordinance was Promulgated in 1982 establishing rules for receiving any foreign contribution by a citizen of, or organisation in Bangladesh and also for making such regulation by any government organisation of a citizen of a foreign state<sup>6</sup>.

The External Resources Division of the Ministry of Finance was controlling Ministry of NGOs till 1988 when the cabinet Division was given the responsibility of co-ordination massive NGO investment after devastating floods of 1988. Subsequently the NGO leaders demanded more flexibility in their operations and the then government created the NGO Affairs Bureau in February 1990, so as to provide non-stop service to the NGOs which either foreign or are funded from foreign sources.

There are thousands of voluntary organisations which extended their helping hands primarily to support governmental efforts to rehabilitate and to

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5. Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, ERD, A Handbook on Non-governmental Organization, Dhaka, September 9, 1986.

6. Ibid.

develop. Here we mentioned the names of some registered voluntary organisations who are both foreign and Bangladesh origin.

Some of the important foreign national Voluntary Organisations in Bangladesh are<sup>7</sup>:-

### Foreign NGOs

1. CARE	USA
2. World Missionary Evangelism	USA
3. The Salvation Army	UK
4. Swedish Free Mission	Sweden
5. OXFAM	UK
6. SOS, Children Village International	Australia
7. Rodda Baren	Sweden
8. Asian American Free Labour Inst.	USA
9. Rangpur Self-help Aid Service	Denmark
10. Terre- Des - Homes	French
11. Bangladesh Lutheran Mission	Finland
12. Teree-Des Homes, International Federation	Holland
13. Japanese Missionary Fellowship	Japan
14. Terre-Des-Homer	Switzerland
15. Ramkrishna Mission	India
16. New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society	New Zealand
17. CONCERN	Ireland
18. Nor-Wegian Red Cross	Norway
19. Rabiati At Ham Al Islami	Saudi Arabia
20 South Asia Partnership	Canada

7. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh A Handbook ..... op. cit. p. 28-34.

**National NGOs**

1. Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
2. Christian Service Society.
3. Assistance for the blind Children
4. Christian Commission for development in Bangladesh
5. CARITAS.
6. Bangladesh Voluntary Service.
7. HEED- Bangladesh.
8. Gono Unnayan Prochesta.
9. Kumudini Welfare Trust of Bengal.
10. Proshika.
11. Young Women's Christian Association of Bangladesh.
13. Rural Development and Health Centre.
14. The Golden Clinic.
15. ASA
16. MIDAS
17. Agriculture Development.
18. Technical Assistance for Rural Development.
19. Village Education Research centre.
20. Dipshika.
21. Social Association for Rural Development.
22. Progressive Rural Organisation for Voluntary Activities.
23. Women for Women.
24. Barisal Development Centre.
25. Saptagram Nari Swanirvar Parishod.

In the Third world countries development related responsibilities are not only on the government but also on the NGOs. So, it is rare to find out NGOs which are not related with the government. Most of the NGOs are registered with government and they work within the legal frame work which exists in the country. Sometimes the relation of the NGOs with the government are filled with distrust and conflict and sometimes it is co-operational. But the role of NGOs in Bangladesh are constructive and complementary to the development efforts of the government. Although, the leaders of different NGOs sometimes criticize the development efforts of the government, but it is not against the interest of the state.

**CHAPTER : SIX****ADRA — ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY**

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADRA****BACKGROUND IN RELIEF WORK**

World War II brought unprecedented devastation to Europe, parts of Asia and North Africa; whole nations were threatened by starvation and disease. In 1944 and 1945 the church set up warehouses in New York and San Francisco to process relief materials for overseas shipment. The General conference of Seventh-day-Adventist established ties with the CARE program which lasted for decades. During the decade of the 1940s, 2,799,264. pounds of clothing were shipped to 41 countries and areas affected by world war II, mainly Europe and the Pacific.

**AGENCY ORGANIZED IN 1956.**

As relief activities grew in the decade following world war II, church leaders saw advantages in giving these growing international operations a clearer identity as a distinct service of the church. In November 1956, the General conference voted articles of incorporation of Seventh-day-Adventist Welfare Service Inc. (SAWS). The corporation was to undertake, promote, develop and carry on charitable or educational work; to carry on national and international relief among peoples of all nations, in times of peace or war, to alleviate pain, hunger, and suffering by providing food, clothing and



medicine and as well as funds and services for their administration and distribution; to and in the spiritual, moral and physical rehabilitation of victims of war or other disasters including emigration, immigration, repatriation and resettlement of refugees and the supply and conduct of social services such as health, education recreation, self-help, vocational training and community centers, including provision of funds supplies and equipment; and to carry on reconstruction by providing technical services, funds, supplies and equipment for the restoration, construction and installation of schools, libraries, orphanages, hospitals, health centers, industrial plants and agricultural projects.

This apparently kept the agencies focus almost exclusively on relief activities and it took too decades to start implementing development projects. Nevertheless, the corporate charter of the agency opened the way for immediate and remarkable growth in operations. In 1958, SAWS reported relief shipment to 22 countries with a total value of about 485,000. Four years later, the number of countries has increased to 29, with a total value of \$ 2.3 million in shipments. During this period, countries benefiting included those in South America and Middle East, the sites of major disasters.

**FOOD PROGRAMS DOMINATED EARLY YEARS**

Much of this growth was due to SAWS relationship with the newly established United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with the responsibility for implementing the Provisions of US Public Law 480. That law provided for the distribution of US surplus foodgrains to foreign countries through private voluntary organisations like SAWS. As a result, from 1960 to 1962, the amount of SAWS total shipments sent in food increased by four times from seven million pounds to nearly 29 million pounds. By 1969, SAWS had doubled the number of countries it worked in as well as the amount of cloths and medicine still, however the focus remain on disaster relief, with greater involvement in South America.

**FIRST STEPS IN TO DEVELOPMENT**

By the mid-1970s, the agency began to broaden its mission from disaster relief into programs leading to recognized, long-term development. The 1976, SAWS Reporter tabloid promotion for that year's biennial offering ran a brief story about a new SAWS initiative in Chad. The SAWS entered into a contract with USAID to conduct a four year program in agricultural training for 150 French speaking farmers. Agronomists would help the farmers divert water from a river into a dry but fertile area and teach the

farmers appropriate techniques for managing the water system to raise sorghum, rice, corn, wheat, potatoes and vegetables.

The manager of SAWS noted in the story: "The chad program represents a new area of self-help service for SAWS."

Since its founding in 1956, SAWS has been a disaster and famine relief agency, responding to victims in time of crisis. This effort is a much longer-range attempt to feed the hungry and Shahlian Africa. This project, which proved highly successful and became a model example of development, coincided with a broadening vision symbolized by a slight but significant change in the agencies name. In 1973, the church replaced the word "welfare" with "world" suggesting the move beyond crisis assistance to worldwide initiatives for general human development. SAWS became Seventh-day-Adventist World Service Inc.

#### NEW EMPHASIS AND NAME

The late 1970s found aggressively developing its relationship with USAID for activities similar to the chad agricultural project. In 1981 SAWS received a USAID "matching grant" for a program for human resource and community development in 23 countries primarily in Africa.

This matching grant was probably what finally feebly established

community development as a part of the agency's portfolio. Government donors from Canada and Australia began granting community development money to church entities as early as 1976.

Meanwhile, another entity, Committee for Institutional Development at church world headquarters, began tagging opportunities from European donor governments. In the late 1970s, this committee at Washington D. C, received a grant for several hundred thousand dollars. This money came from EZE (Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe), a foreign aid agency of the West German government and was earmarked for new construction at Mortemorelos University in Mexico. With that success, the committee began attracting funding for Adventist institutions from other European donors such as the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and from similar organisation in Norway, Denmark and Holland.

The church wanted to emphasize the shift from a predominately relief organization to one that included both community development and the development of institutions. It also wanted to provide better coordination and promotion of these different, yet related, programs. To do so, church leaders merged SAWS and the Committee for Institutional Development in 1983 to form the "Adventist Development and Relief Agency" (ADRA).

## **EXPANDING PROGRAMS**

About the time of the reorganization ADRA assisted financially in establishing donor country offices in Europe and Canada and several key regional recipient country offices. This helped lay the ground work for rapid growth to follow in the mid and late 1980s. Throughout the decade, ADRA's program grew rapidly with major programs in several countries, emphasizing community development, food distributions and disaster relief.

Today, ADRA International office in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA, serves as the coordinating office for a growing network of donor and recipient offices worldwide. There are 10 Regional offices located in conjunction with the Adventist Churches. The regional ADRA offices oversee ADRA's work on the subregional and local country level. Countries providing support are referred to as donor countries and countries where projects are implemented are called recipient countries.

ADRA started its operation in Bangladesh since 1971. The initial activities consisted primarily of relief and rehabilitation such as distribution of relief materials, house building programs, distribution of income generating tools etc. The current plans envisage primarily participatory rural development emphasizing health, family planning, sanitation, income generation and agricultural improvement for marginalized section of rural

population. Thus ADRA is taking part in socio-economic development, an important component of nation-building.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF ADRA**

Seventh-day Adventists believe that their philosophy of and relief aid is authorized in concept and outlined in scope by the Holy Scriptures.

Because of its biblical perspectives the Seventh-day Adventist Church regards as germane its involvement in Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has been established to express the Church's concerns in this area and to meet the following objectives.

1. To awake concern for the very poor, the deprived, the sick, the malnourished and the victims of natural and man-made disasters resulting in the commitment by the Church of its own funds and resources for the benefit of such needy people.
2. To establish policies and procedures which eliminate race, sex, creed or politics from the criteria used for granting aid.
3. To deepen the desire to understand the causes of deprivation, injustice and need so that assistance given will be appropriate to the community and to the Church's view of its mission.

4. To develop plans and policies which not only meet emergency needs but also seek to put in place programs to provide long-term solution.
5. To involve the established organizations of the church not only in their historic role in development and relief and in the spiritual mission of the Church, but also as participants in new initiatives in community development and relief.
6. To establish a partnership with those in need which seek to meet their needs within their respective cultural context, which they will regard as appropriate and helpful in both the short-term and long-term perspectives.
7. To seek cooperation with denominations, philanthropic organization, government agencies and development banks which share the Church's concerns with whom it may participate in meeting human needs.
8. To welcome partnership with organizations which work toward the restoration of human dignity through development and relief and which seek to improve the quality of life as it is understood by the benefiting community; and to bring to such partnership the Church's own internally generated development and relief funds as well as to accept

partnership in funding with other organization and the benefiting community.

9. To utilize the Church's international infrastructure and communication system for the distribution and monitoring of programs.
10. To use relief resources at its disposal, to answer immediate needs and to involve it in long-term commitments to meet agreed-upon goals and objectives.
11. To communicate the spiritual values which the church has in very nature without using them as criteria for giving aid.
12. To establish policies and procedures which will ensure the sponsored volunteers and fully paid employs that their skills, will be toward meeting the needs for which they are assigned to and the Church has historically regarded as essential the trained deployment of local personnel to meet communities need and expectations.
13. To develop a program of communication and information and without the church to make known its objectives and programs in development and relief.



Thus we can see that ADRA is working towards a goal of elimination of elite-mass gap and socio-economic development of different ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups of the people in Bangladesh, which are the important components of nation building. And in this way ADRA is also taking part in nation building activities in Bangladesh.

## **CHAPTER: SEVEN**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY OF WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OF  
ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY, MADHUPUR, TANGAIL**

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The chapter deals with the socio-economic condition prevailing in the project area and the extent of benefit drawn by the people from the project.

## **PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**

Bangladesh is a small country encompassing 55,600 square miles, with a population of more than 120 million people. The majority of these people are uneducated does not but education for most Bangladeshi mean a formal classroom education. It stretches for beyond the classroom into everyday living. A lack of basic health care education causes babies and children in Bangladesh to become sick and die needlessly. Most adults die at a very young age. Birth control is not yet accepted by the majority of the people. A continual birth explosion, very little formal education, no knowledge of basic health principles, poor housing and almost no income are all problems here. Floods and cyclones strike on a regular basis. How do we solve these problems? There are times when we at ADRA, Bangladesh felt helpless and wanted to give up but ever present in our minds is ADRA's motto-changing the world, one life at a time.

Three years ago four communities were designated, project officers were selected and four women's development officers (WDOs) were chosen

and trained for their jobs. The WDOs will live in the community with the women they work with.

Surveys were taken in each community. Indicators on health, nutrition and socio-economic situation were shown. The problems were explained and offered to families. But at the beginning the women were reluctant to even come to their doors and speak with the WDOs, with the approval of their husbands, which is very important, functional education and basic health principles and group cooperation were taught at a central location in each community. To come from their homes for a meeting is a giant step for these women. Some of them have never left the area of their family unit except to go to the market. A new life begins to evolve as they learn to sign their name, read numbers and count money. Women learn about the importance of washing hands, cleaning fingernails, drinking clean water and eating right foods.

These women can never think of going to a hospital to have a baby. There are women in each community who are well respected and traditionally deliver all babies but their knowledge is only gained by experience. Training as well as basic supply kit is given to the traditional birth attendants (TBAs). They become qualified to promote immunization and family planning work with antenatal care, safe delivery, postnatal care and breast feeding.

As time progresses, the women become more friendly, gain self confidence, develop social awareness and a cooperation begin to form Muslims, Hindus, and Christians all work together in a group. This was previously unheard of.

As the functional literacy program continues, the women find that they can read a news paper printed just for them. They are also able to read simple stories to their children. ADRA Bangladesh developed a board game along the lines of snakes and Ladders on a map of Bangladesh. Along the way players need to answer income generation related question correctly to climb the ladder . They also learn about their country as they play, expanding their education. The women development officers find the group enjoying the game so much that they have trouble sending them home.

Once they successfully complete six month training program on functional literacy, savings and health education, plus training in credit management and technical education on small income generation project, the women are eligible for their first small income generation loan. Some buy chickens for personal egg use and for sale; other buy goats or cows for milk and fattening for sale. They also chose rice husking, thatch selling, cash crops, milk delivery or run small grocery shop. One industrious lady ever purchases gasoline and oil in bulk and makes a profit by selling it to the men

is smaller portions. The income generation and savings component of the project has a management committee of an elected group of leaders from the group who act as a pressure group. They ensure repayment of loans among themselves. For the first time the women have a small savings. These women enthusiastically try to find ways of increasing their income and eventually become independent of ADRA, which is the ultimate goal. regular repayments are made on the loans and in most cases, they are ahead of expectation.

A young Hindu mother from one of the groups died at childbirth, leaving her new born baby, Litton, to die also. We visited Litton in May 1992, when he was a month old. At that time we found him being cared for by a Muslim lady belonging to same group something that does not happen in the village of Bangladesh. It was touching to be told by Pobon Ritchil, the project officer, "All the ladies in the group, regardless of religion, have been lacking turns looking after Litton". Furthermore, the women voted 100 percent in favour of taking money from their group saving to purchase formula to feed Litton. "We have broken through many years of prejudice and barriers; the cooperative is working!"

Ritchil says.

Recently, one woman was growing vegetables on public property

beside the road. She had a wonderful crop. Amazingly, none of her vegetables were stolen. Some other women pooled their resources and planted a large field of cabbages, yielding a bumper crop. These are very different, confident women, compared to the frightened, reluctant women of three years ago. It is exciting to see so many taking control of their own lives and making real financial and health contributions to their families.

It is understood that the education process will never be complete but ADRA has changed the lives of 1,600 women and it will continue to work, to change one life at a time.

**CHAPTER: EIGHT**  
**CONCLUSION**



Bangladesh is an overwhelmingly rural country. It has the fourth highest rural population in the world. The teeming millions of this country however live in a beautiful lush green environment under severe physical and economic strains. They are very simple, ethnically homogeneous, speaking one language, hospitable to guests and demanding a minimum for life comfort.

Bangladesh is one of those countries however which has been receiving large quantities of foreign aid. Bangladesh gets approximately \$1.5 billion of aid every year and that accounts for nearly 50 percent of its total revenue budget, 80 percent of its development budget and 10 percent of the Gross National product. Aid is given to Bangladesh expressly for the purpose of eradicating poverty and straightening the economy. But it is suppressing that poverty has been increasing day by day. A number of national and foreign NGOs are working in Bangladesh. In nation building process, socio-economic development is a very important components where NGOs have been playing a major role.

From 1971, a number of voluntary organization, both foreign and Bangladeshi came forward with helping hands to support government efforts to rehabilitate the war affected people of Bangladesh. Although initially these voluntary organizations participated in the relief and rehabilitation work,

gradually they started involving themselves into other areas of development activities. They are now involved in health, education, family planing, agriculture and other socio-economic development activities.

ADRA—Adventist Development and Relief Agency started its operation in Bangladesh since 1971. The initial activities consisted primarily of relief and rehabilitation such as distribution of relief materials, house building programs, distribution of income generating tools etc. The current plans envisage primarily participatory rural development emphasizing health, family planing Sanitation, income generations and agricultural improvement for marginalized section of rural population. ADRA is working towards a goal of elimination of mass-elite gap and socio-economic development of different ethnic, linguistic, 4 religious groups of Bangladesh, Which are the most important components of nation-building.

In the socio-economic study of women's development project of ADRA, we have seen that it has changed 1,600 women's lives. It has broken through many years of prejudice and barriers. Though ADRA is a small NGO, still it is taking part of the nation-building activities of Bangladesh.

Today, ADRA, International's office is in Silver spring, Maryland, USA, serves as the coordinating offices for a growing network of donors and recipient offices worldwide network of donors and recipient offices

worldwide. Regional offices are located in conjunction with the Adventist churches 10 overseas Division offices. The regional overseas offices oversee ADRA's work on the sub-regional and local country level providing support. In 1995 39 years after its founding as a formal agency, ADRA maintains operations in 112 countries with a worldwide budget for operation well over \$ 10 million.

In the conclusion, I would like to mention that the aid-dependent strategy has not being able to change the lot of poor population in a big way in Bangladesh. It has been admitted that the path so long treated for the process of development is needed to be re-examined in order to achieve the desired objectives. If the development process continues in the manner, it may further widen the gap between the poor and the rich.

Donor's interest in giving aid to Bangladesh is to restore order and bring in social change through useful means. The continuation of donors influence in the aid recipient country poses a grave threat to the actual progress of the economy and society. While utilizing aid in development work, especially in the rural areas, this has to be offset and realistic approach has to be adopted in handling the problems.

However, the present study clearly reveals that the role of NGOs in Bangladesh are constructive and complementary to the development efforts of

the government of Bangladesh. Although, the leaders of different NGO's sometimes criticizes the development efforts of the government, but it is not against the interest of the state.

A rational approach based on priority basis should be followed in involving the NGOs to promote socio-economic development of the country, which should be fitted with infra-structural changes enabling the rural poor to have increased and effective participation in the nation-building activities.

**Appendix -A.****DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
DHAKA UNIVERSITY, DHAKA, BANGLADESH.**

May 15,1993

Dear Sir,

James Prodip Adhikary, a student of Political Science Department, Dhaka University is conducting a research on: "NGO AND THE NATION BUILDING: THE ROLE OF ADRA IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT", as a partial requirement of M. Phil Degree. He will collect data through questionnaires, interview and from published materials. I hope that you will kindly allow and help him for this purpose. Your kind assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated.

The data will be treated as extremely confidential and will be used exclusively for the research and no other purpose.

Sincerely yours,

Sd/-

(Dr. Dalem Chandra Barman)  
Associate Professor  
Department of Political Science  
Dhaka University.

## Appendix-B.

### ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY

149, Shah Ali Bagh, Mirpur-1, Dhaka-1210

April 29, 1991

James P. Adhikary, Lecturer  
Bangladesh Adventist Seminary & College  
Goalbathan, Kaliakor  
Gazipur, Bangladesh

Dear Mr. Adhikary,

On 16 April, 1991 the ADRA Board voted in action 91-29 the following action:

"to approve J. P. Adhikary's research paper on ADRA, as an example of an NGO involved in National Development, provided he clears all materials with the ADRA Director".

Personally, I assure you, we will do our best to cooperate with your research in providing access to information and materials and visits to projects to facilitate an unbiased research out come.

Cordially  
Sd/-  
Jerald whitehouse,  
Director  
Adventist Development & Relief Agency

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