

## MAAPSI proposal on new voters of Bangladesh

Narrowing the Gaps between Civic Rights and Responsibilities: Targeting the New Generation Voters as change agents with particular focus on vulnerable groups (women, religious minorities and disabled persons)

The location of this project is in Khulna division where magnitude and frequency of violence related to women and religious minority was remarkably high from compared with other part of Bangladesh (Source: [www.muktamana.com](http://www.muktamana.com)). Administratively Khulna division is comprised of 10 districts. Of that 6 are proposed for this project to work with. These six districts have 27 electoral constituencies comprised of 47 upazillas and 415 unions in total (source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Pocket Book, 1998). However, some basic electoral information about the project area is presented below:

Country	Divisions	Region(s)/ Districts	No. of Election Constituencies	Voters Population (2001)		
				Male	Female	Total
Bangladesh	Khulna	Khulna	6	585,289	541,574	1,126,863
		Jessore	6	755,308	728,280	1,483,588
		Jhenaidah	4	496,268	479,249	975,517
		Narail	2	217,410	215,349	432,759
		Satkhira	5	539,884	542,435	1,082,319
		Bagerhat	4	446,447	433,937	880,384
<b>Total</b>		<b>Districts- 06</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3,040,606</b>	<b>2940,824</b>	<b>5,981,430</b>

Source: Bangladesh National Election Commission, 2005

Since the administrative districts are not same in size and population, therefore electoral constituencies are being considered in designing volume of activities and staff recruitment varied in number for individual partner organizations.

## Summary

---

Bangladesh, a country of 145 million people is politically very volatile. The total number of voters in the last election of 2001 was 75 million. Every general election has seen an increase of approximately 8.5 million new voters. Although this new generation voters play a pivotal role, even sometimes as the determining factor in government formation but no government initiatives are in place to make them aware and educated, therefore this project targets for educating them to build a sense of both rights and responsibility in casting their votes. It also aims to promote them as a social change agent for promoting non-violent electoral environment. The main activities of this project will focus on enabling them for making informed choice in a non-discriminatory manner in selecting their representatives and narrowing the knowledge gap between their understanding and realization of rights and responsibility to the state and democracy and a fair election process. Possible candidates for the Member of Parliament and their supporters group including mass people will also be mobilized for rebuilding the trust and mutual respect among voters, government representatives, political parties and community towards a democratic norms and values in the society. This project will address more than one sector or themes as outlined in the call for proposals. Attention would be provided towards women, religious minorities and disabled people as a cross-cutting focus while working with the young voters putting stress on the messages addressing anti-violence, tolerance and dialogue for creating an enabling environment for fair politics and elections. The project will target geographically 6 districts out 10 under Khulna division where post-election violence was severely prevailing immediate after the national election in 2001. This will cover 27 election constituencies.

## Objectives

---

Ensuring free and fair election role of both the electorate and candidates should have significant role in the whole process. Placing particular focus on the young citizens (aged 18 – 22 years) of Bangladesh who are for the first time going to practice their voting rights in the national election, the broader objective of this project would be to contribute in Consolidation of free and fair elections in Bangladesh. However, the development objective of this action would be, ‘Vulnerable groups (particularly women, religious minorities, and disabled people) empowered and their access to the electoral process in general improved.’ While reaching to the targeted vulnerable groups specific age range of 18 – 22 years would be prioritized considering them as the First Time Voters (FTVs) through providing necessary and required knowledge and information for making them as responsible voting rights holders.

The overarching focus of this intervention will target for creating an enabling and non-violent environment where free and fair election could be held. As the meaningful participation of the candidates, the supporters and the voters can make the electoral process successful, two-fold approach would be undertaken for attaining the visionary goal. The new generation voters would be empowered with relevant information and education in one hand and the potential candidates and their supporter groups including mass people would be sensitized and aware for influencing the election process positively on the other. However, the two specific objectives of this project would be:

### **Objective 01:**

First Time Voters (FTVs) aged 18 – 22 years are educated on the civic rights and responsibilities for promoting human rights and gender responsive election environment and making informed choice in representative selection

Out of total 75 million voters 38 million are male and 36 million are female where 8 million belong to disable group. Every general election has seen an increase of approximately 8.5 million new first time voters. Khulna division, comprised of 10 administrative districts, possesses 8.7 million voters, where 4.4 million are male and 4.2 million female. Out of the scenario our proposed project area, 6 administrative districts, possesses 5.9 million voters, where 3.0 million are male voters and 2.9 million are female. Of them 19.2% belong to the age group 18-22 years and 30% are religious minorities (source: National Election Commission). For achieving the first objective the vulnerable groups (particularly women, religious minorities and disabled people) will be targeted where particular age group between 18 -21 years would be prioritized considering them as the first time voters. Since democratic practice requires both civic rights and responsibility therefore initiative would be undertaken to promote that message leading to practice among the new generation voters so that they can work as a catalyst in transforming the same into a culture in future. In total 56,700 FTVs will be targeted directly in this project for education and awareness raising. Of them 270 FTVs (10 FTVs X 27 constituencies) will be mobilized for enabling them to work as a motivator and peace promoter among the mass people including the potential MP candidates. Balanced information about rights and responsibilities would be offered to them so that they become not only a rights holders but a responsible citizen for the state. Mass campaign, distribution of IEC materials, popular theatre will be carried out for disseminating non-violence message.

### **Objective 02:**

Potential MP Candidates and supporters group are mobilized for facilitating non-violent election environment through initiating a community based preventive mechanism for reducing violence trend

At least 56 potential candidates (14 target constituencies where at least 4 candidates in each constituency) will be communicated. Regular sharing meetings among themselves in presence of

mass people would be organized to elicit promises from them to the general voters regarding non-violent attitudes and practices. Interactive session among law enforcing agencies, journalists, and representatives from various professional groups, local NGOs, and different party agents would be organized for creating an environment where all the respective participants feel accountable to each other in delivering their duties towards the national electoral process.

### Justification

---

Violence towards women and minority regarding election is a new form of violence in Bangladesh. Since last two decades, in Bangladesh, election conflict is being an alarming factor. In last parliament election 2001, it has been observed that political context of violence towards women and minorities in different areas of the country reached to its extreme. In pre and post national election period, 2001 at least 400 cases were published in different national daily news papers, thousands of women and minorities were victimized. The situation was alarming mostly in the minority especially Hindu community of the country.

A study of human rights organization, Ain O Shalish Kendra (ASK) claimed that in 15<sup>th</sup> September to 27<sup>th</sup> October 2001 a total number of 330 violence cases occurred in the country, out of which 67 was in Khulna division. In the pre and post election situation women are oppressed in various forms, like rape, abduction, physical assault, beating, battering, threat and forced migration. Besides, robbery, land grabbing, property looting, murder, destruction and burning of houses/business centres of minority community.

In this backdrop to achieve the overall objective, consolidation of free and fair elections in Bangladesh, of the programme and specifically to enable the electorate in targeted areas to make independent, informed decisions at the ballot box a particular segment of people of the society is targeted in this intervention who are, young by age, going to practice their voting right for the first time in the upcoming national election in 2007. These 18 -22 years First Time Voters (FTVs) mostly do not have any party affiliation. But they are a very energetic and active segment of the society who can be turned into very influential social change agent. If these FTVs are aware of their civic duties and responsibilities, a whole new generation of responsible citizens will be formed who will influence others.

Bangladesh politics is traditionally marked by a lack of tolerance and respect. Polarization and deep mistrust among politicians of the main political parties are its glaring features. As a result state responsibility to make mass people aware about fair voting and taking informed decisions do not take place. Consequently, lack of mass awareness is widely prevailing; people are in want of peaceful environment for practicing their voting rights. Therefore, initiatives for offering various options before the voters and approach for unlocking their consciousness are very much the need of the time.

Elections in Bangladesh have historically been disrupted by political interference, including intimidation and violence at the polling stations, vote rigging, undue influence and manipulation. The ruling and opposition parties pursue confrontational politics. Political parties do not practice inner party democracy; instead it is built around personalities rather than policies and lacks transparency. Given the discretionary powers of the leadership to award party nominations and the tough anti-defection law, the party leadership has strong control over its members. As a result, unfair political influence is dominating the whole electoral process. Money and muscle power have taken over the place of merit and fair choices, lack of general culture of respecting others are aggravating the whole scenario of public representative choice process. Ultimately the representatives who are becoming the parliamentarians are not showing their respect to the electorate or state for carrying out their roles.

Democratic atmosphere is a must pre condition of good governance and election is an important process of democracy. Women are the vital part of democracy, especially in Bangladesh where around 50% of total population is women. The minority and marginalized women were oppressed in pre and post election period widely. MAAPSI believes that unless and until a gender responsive electoral process is ensured, democracy will not reach its goal.

Gender sensitive messages are not given to the mass people, political leader, civil society and government administration including police. Moreover, in last parliamentary election, people's institutions and respective government departments did not perform their role properly in addressing gender violence. The victims also were not aware where to go for shelter and legal support.

MAAPSI thinks that pre and post election violence are serious violation of human rights and preventive measures should be taken. It is clear to anybody concerned that if no preventive measures are taken against the election violence in the 9<sup>th</sup> parliamentary election in January 2007 situation may become uncontrollable. Therefore, from previous learning MAAPSI desires to protect minorities and women to promote human rights and civic awareness about fair election process.

In this backdrop this project is particularly focusing to empower the vulnerable groups (i.e. women, religious minority and disabled persons) to perform their voting rights. In focusing that group a particular age 18 – 22 years is prioritized so that they can work as a driving force in prevention of violence. Out of total 7.5 million voters the proposed 6 districts of Khulna division possess around 5.9 million. Therefore, the total 5.9 million voters of Khulna division would benefit from this project.

As every general election has catered for approximately 8.5 million new voters of minimum age of 18 to 22 years they are included in the voter list but they do not have any knowledge or information of taking such a kind of crucial decision which can change the course of politics and change the power basis. Therefore, this newly inducted voters group have been selected as the target groups of this action. Moreover, MAAPSI has been working with youth folk for a quite long time which convinced us that this group of population can significantly contribute in any national level initiative. Considering that two points in mind this action has selected the new generation voters as the target group irrespective of women, minority and physical disability. Activities aim to make them enable in taking an informed decision while selecting their representative. It also reveals to make them as a defender group in promoting non-violent electoral environment.

The activities are very much relevant in such a sense that if this group of first time voters are educated in their early age of civic responsibilities would be matured enough to promote a society free from violence, a society which will promote honesty and non-discriminatory attitudes towards all.

## **Detailed description of activities**

### **Output: 1.1 First Time Voters (FTVs) are educated and aware about voter rights and responsibilities**

#### **Activities:**

##### **1.1.1 Organize Press Conference for mass dissemination and sensitization**

After completing the partnership agreement between MAAPSI and the six district-level partner organizations and subsequent staff recruitment both at national and local level seven press

conferences will be organized. The purpose would be to share and disseminate the project ideas and activities with the media people for wider media coverage. This will also help to create a mass awareness about the issue and project ideas and thus ultimately contribute in creating people's sensitization nationally and regionally. One press conference will be in Dhaka and rest six in the project districts- Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Narail, Jessore and Jhenaidah. MAAPSI will organize at the national level in Dhaka and other six partner organizations will organize in their respective districts. However, MAAPSI will extend technical supports by preparing the project briefs for distributing among the media peoples and houses. Representatives of local organizations will response to the media peoples' queries, if any and one representative from MAAPSI will also join in the district level press conference.

#### 1.1.2 Conduct a rapid assessment about the number of First Time Voters in the project areas

A rapid assessment will be conducted in the project areas, 6 districts out of 10 under Khulna division, for gathering the information about the number of the new generation voters who are between 18-22 years age and going to practice their voting rights for the first time in the national election possibly to be held in 2007. These six districts represent 27 electoral constituencies in the National Parliament. The constituencies are distributes as per the table:

SI	Districts Name	Total Number of Constituencies
01	Khulna	06
02	Jessore	06
03	Jhenaidah	04
04	Narail	02
05	Satkhira	05
06	Bagerhat	04
<b>TOTAL Constituencies</b>		<b>27</b>

The result will help in designing concrete work and activities plan accordingly. A consultant team will be commissioned for the assessment where MAAPSI will coordinate the whole work with other six district-level partners in Khulna, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Narail, Satkhira and Bagerhat. Out of the total number 2100 FTVs will be targeted from each constituency for the project activities. Therefore in total 56,700 FTVs will be considered as the direct target groups of this project.

#### 1.1.3 Explore First Time Voters' (FTVs) perception on election

A free-hand drawing event will be organized with the participation of new generation voters in each district. Objective of this event will be to explore the perception of the FTVs about the national election framework, its process, images about candidates, approach of politicians towards voters in the period pre-, during and post election, as a first time voters what their role should be etc. These will be organized in each district on a long white canvas for using that in further display in national level and utilize that as an advocacy tool with relevant government ministry. Here 100 young voters will sketch freely about their views and perception about the above broadly mentioned issue/areas. Local partners in respective district will lead the event with overall technical coordinating support from MAAPSI. A technical review committee will be formed in each district with relevant experts and resource persons for reviewing the drawings and finally prepare a narrative report on that for utilizing in further advocacy work.

#### 1.1.4 Organize TOT for the trainers of local partner organizations

Organizing training will be a crucially important part of this project where ultimately 56,700 FTVs will be trained on Civic Rights and Responsibilities. To facilitate the process a trainer's team will be prepared through offering Training of Trainers (ToT) courses. Well trained and experienced training cell of MAAPSI will facilitate the 2-day ToT for the recruited volunteer trainers of local partner organizations. In total 162 volunteer trainers will be offered. This ToT will be organized centrally in Dhaka.

#### 1.1.5 Produce handy manual for orientations

Following the ToT a three-four pages handy orientation manual on Civic Rights and Responsibilities (CRR) will be produced and printed for the FTVs. In total 60,000 copies will be printed and widely distributed among the participants and relevant stakeholders, if required. Moreover, the youth remaining out of the orientation would be able to get an idea from this self-explanatory manual. The manual deal with the Bangladesh constitution, civic rights, rights as a voter, election process, Election Commission and its various tiers from national to local levels, characteristics of voters and candidates, roles and responsibilities of voters and candidates, various elections and government processes, human rights, rights of voters and transparency and accountability of the process and democratic practice. MAAPSI will take lead in producing and printing the manual for further distribution at district-level.

#### 1.1.6 Organize 2-day orientation on Civic Rights and Responsibilities (CRR) for the FTVs

In total 56,700 FTVs will be covered under this 2-day comprehensive training event. 100 FTVs will be covered in each batch whereas 21 batches will be oriented in each constituency. In total 567 batches orientation sessions will be organized in 27 constituencies under 6 districts of Khulna division. This orientation will follow the handy manual produced in this project. Representatives from local administration, local government representatives and community leaders including inter-religious leaders will be invited to grace these events.

#### 1.1.7 Organize cultural events for promoting civic awareness about fair elections among the FTVs

Youth folk love music especially prefers to get the messages from their model star. To make the message more attractive to them cultural events will be organized for conveying the message to them. Through this cultural event the young audiences will interact with the performer on various messages like young people's role in a country development process, how they can utilize their time and efforts for the benefits of a nation, gender equality, co-existence of inter-religious beliefs, working together with disabled etc. The young audiences will be offered a voter education kit/packet comprised of handy manual for orientation, posters, leaflets etc. for their knowledge building. Such an attractive event will be organized district wise for one time.

#### 1.1.8 Produce VCD cassettes with traditional folk songs

In the remote village the influence of traditional folk song is still predominant. Every evening after finishing their day's work the villagers spend their time mainly in the tea stalls and village-markets where the folk songs are played. This can play a significant role in disseminating messages and changing their behaviour. Target group oriented messages will be promoted through such VCD cassettes. Popular folk song writers and singers will be contracted for writing

and recording these VCD cassettes. The cassette will focus on violence-free election, increased participation of women, religious minorities and disabled persons in election, importance of selecting honest and right representatives for human rights promotion and poverty reduction etc. Programme Organizers of the local partner organizations will have interactive sessions about the messages and its impacts with the listeners MAAPSI will be responsible for contracting the song writers, signers, recording and reproduction for distribution among the local partner organizations. In total 5,000 pieces will be produced for wider distribution and dissemination.

#### 1.1.9 Produce relevant IEC materials (posters and leaflets)

Two types of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials will be produced under this project. More emphasis on pictorial presentation in message development would be paid so that it can reach the target people who are not always educated. 135,000 pieces of leaflets will be produced for very wide distribution and dissemination of messages. However, poster will be 108,000 pieces. MAAPSI will lead in message development and printing the material in close consultation with local partner organizations so that it can understandable to the grassroots level voters and target groups. These will be distributed among partner organizations for using in their respective working areas.

### **Output: 1.2 FTVs are motivated enough to promote non-violent and non-discriminatory election environment for enabling vulnerable groups participation in electoral process**

#### 1.2.1 Formation of Youth Peace Forum-YPF at the constituency level

Youth Peace Forum-YPF will be formed in each electoral constituency with 10 FTVs. Care would be taken for equal representation of women, religious minorities and disabled in the forum. Purpose of this forum would be to work as a peer group for motivating other youths. They will also meet with possible MP candidates, their support groups, law enforcing agencies, work as a volunteers in cultural event, organizing various meetings etc. The forum will motivate other new generation voters for encouraging honest and competent representative selection, peaceful election environment, ensuring of security for the vulnerable groups etc. In total 27 constituency-based forums will be formed in the whole project area of 6 districts under Khulna division. Therefore, 270 FTVs will be covered under this forum initiative who will be recruited from the earlier 2-day orientation on Civic Rights and Responsibilities.

#### 1.2.2 Prepare operational guideline/manual for the Youth Peace Forum

An operational guideline/manual will be prepared for the YPF so that they can run it smoothly. Keeping sustainability and its future continuation in mind efforts would be made to give this forum an institutional framework. This forum will continue their work voluntarily with the local partner organization for promoting peace and establishing civic rights among the community. In relevant cases this forum will take responsibility to educate further new generation voters' and other activities with the help of other available local initiatives. 54 copies of guidelines will be prepared for 27 constituency-based YPF committee.

#### 1.2.3 Organize 1-day orientation on Violence Monitoring and Facts Findings for the YPF members

At the constituency level 1-day orientation on Violence Monitoring and Facts Finding would be organized for the YPF members so that they can monitor the violence and keep record for

forwarding to various human rights organizations, media and relevant administration through the local partner organizations. They will work closely with the local partners' staff. In total 9 batches orientation will be organized in the whole project area. Local organizations with the technical support of MAAPSI will try to get media coverage on the outcome of the fact finding missions.

#### 1.2.4 Formation of three interactive popular theatre groups

Popular theatres, street theatre, drama still have very significant influence to the villagers' lifestyles. Three interactive popular theatre groups will be formed by MAAPSI for performing in various unions/village spots of each targeted constituency. A detailed performance plan will be chalked out during the first two months of the project in consultation with the entire local partner NGOs and other stakeholders.

#### 1.2.5 Organize exposure visit for YPF members

For giving the YPF as an institutional framework like civic rights club after preparing the operational guideline exposure visit will be organized within the six districts. It will encourage them to learn from others, how can they adopt other's good practices, way to work with community peoples etc. In total six exposure visits will be organized during the project period.

### **Output: 2.1 Potential MP Candidates and their support groups are aware and motivated to promote non-violent environment**

#### 2.1.1. Conducting a comprehensive study to explore the number and name of potential MP candidates

A comprehensive study mission would be commissioned for exploring the name and number of potential MP candidates of the constituencies of the project area. Information would also be gathered to get idea about their supporters, their socio-economic background, performance track record, and community level involvement in social disputes and conflict resolution. These findings will help MAAPSI and local organizations to chalk out interventions and concrete action plans. This study will be led by MAAPSI with an external consultant team in cooperation with partner organizations in the 27 constituencies.

#### 2.1.2 Conducting a 1-day sharing meeting with potential MP candidates and law enforcing agencies

One-day sharing meeting about this project will be organized with potential MP candidates, local administration, law enforcing agencies and senior citizens. This sharing will enable Democracywatch as well as the local partnership to be in touch with the relevant stakeholders and actors. Initiative would be made in this meeting to inspire the possible MP candidates for signing up a common memorandum/declaration to combat minority and gender related violence and promote peaceful electoral environment through meeting with YPF members and senior citizens. This would be a tool to make the leaders accountable to the constituency and target groups in case of any violation of the promise and commitment. Local partner organizations will lead this event whereas MAAPSI will provide external technical support.

#### 2.1.3 Print and dissemination of the declaration publicly in respective constituency

This memorandum/declaration would be printed and distributed widely so that a communication would be made between the candidates and the mass people including the vulnerable groups. This will not be an election mandate for any political party but a formal commitment from the individual candidate for promoting peaceful electoral environment and minimizing the feeling of insecurity among the vulnerable target groups.

#### 2.1.4 Organize Radio and TV talk shows

with participation of different tiers of people, potential MP candidates, LEA members, vulnerable group members etc. (total 5 shows in 5 months in Khulna channel) on five different issues

Six Radio and TV talk shows would be organized for broadcasting and airing in the Bangladesh Betar Khulna channel and TV channel. It will be participated by different tiers of people, potential MP candidates, LEA members, vulnerable group members etc. Six different issues would be selected for the talks (not in order form):

- i) Empowerment of vulnerable groups and importance of their access to electoral process;
- ii) Importance of education about rights and responsibilities for the FTVs and government's role in this regard;
- iii) Role of political leaders, youths, LEA members and community people in promoting non-violent election environment;
- iv) Importance of selecting right and competent public representative in democratic practice;
- v) Feasibility of Community-based Violence Monitoring and Prevention mechanism in reducing gender and minority related violence; and
- vi) Role of youth in promoting free and fair national election.

Listeners' and viewers' responses would be entertained in the following show to make it interactive. MAAPSI with the cooperation of respective local partner organization will be responsible for producing the same. TV talk shows will be organized and aired by either public or private TV channel on these six different issues.

### **Output: 2.2 Community based preventive and monitoring mechanism developed for reducing violence trend**

#### 2.2.1 Organize constituency-based mini round-table meeting

Round table meeting in mini form will be organized in each constituency with the participation of potential MP candidates, supporters, voters, local government representatives, conscious and senior citizens including vulnerable groups. This will help to empower the targeted vulnerable groups and create their access to the political leaders for placing their issues. Local partner organizations will coordinate in organizing the event. In total 27 mini round-table meetings will be organized in 27 constituencies where YPF members will participate for placing their issues before other stakeholders.

#### 2.2.2 Formation of Community-based Violence Monitoring and Prevention (CVMP) committee

A Community-based Violence Monitoring and Prevention (CVMP) committee will be formed in each district with the participation of community leaders, representative from local government bodies, leaders from various religions, vulnerable groups' representatives, YPF members. Local partner organization will facilitate the whole committee formation process with technical support. A guideline will be drawn for its operation. In total six district-level committees will be formed.

### 2.2.3 Newspapers scanning at national level

MAAPSI will regularly scan the major national and local newspaper from the six districts and prepare a monthly status report on election-related violence at national and the project areas. It will be shared with the CVMP through local partner organizations for cross-check and further follow-up at the field level by the CVMP and YPF members. This findings and regular monitoring report of CVMP will be compiled and circulated among relevant government and human rights institution for expediting necessary and urgent action. Media will be contacted for its coverage and follow-up.

### 2.2.4 Organize constituency-based CVMP findings follow-up and advocacy meeting

In each constituency advocacy meeting will be organized with the participation of different stakeholders and the CVMP members. The meeting will mainly discuss about the violence monitoring findings of CVMP and its future sustainability. District-level respective organization will provide technical support for making the CVMP an institutional shape for further continuation even after phase out of this project with the community initiative. Earlier developed operational guideline will also be discussed here so that it can continue its work in monitoring election violence during and post election and voter education for promoting free and fair election culture.

### 2.2.5 Organize national level dialogue

Since there are no government level intervention to educate the new generation voters about their rights and responsibilities therefore this project will develop a model for educating FTVs and enable them to work as a social change agent. With the success and lessons learned of this project policy level advocacy would be initiated. Two national level dialogues on sharing the project's interim achievement and its gradual progress will be organized. Since MAAPSI has expertise and mandate to work with youths they will continue further to pursue the issue with government for initiating a state level intervention either by the Election Commission or other relevant authority. Two such dialogues will be organized in Dhaka led by MAAPSI where local partner organizations, YPF members, CVMP committee members will participate and present their working experiences and practical learning's.

## 1.8 Methodology

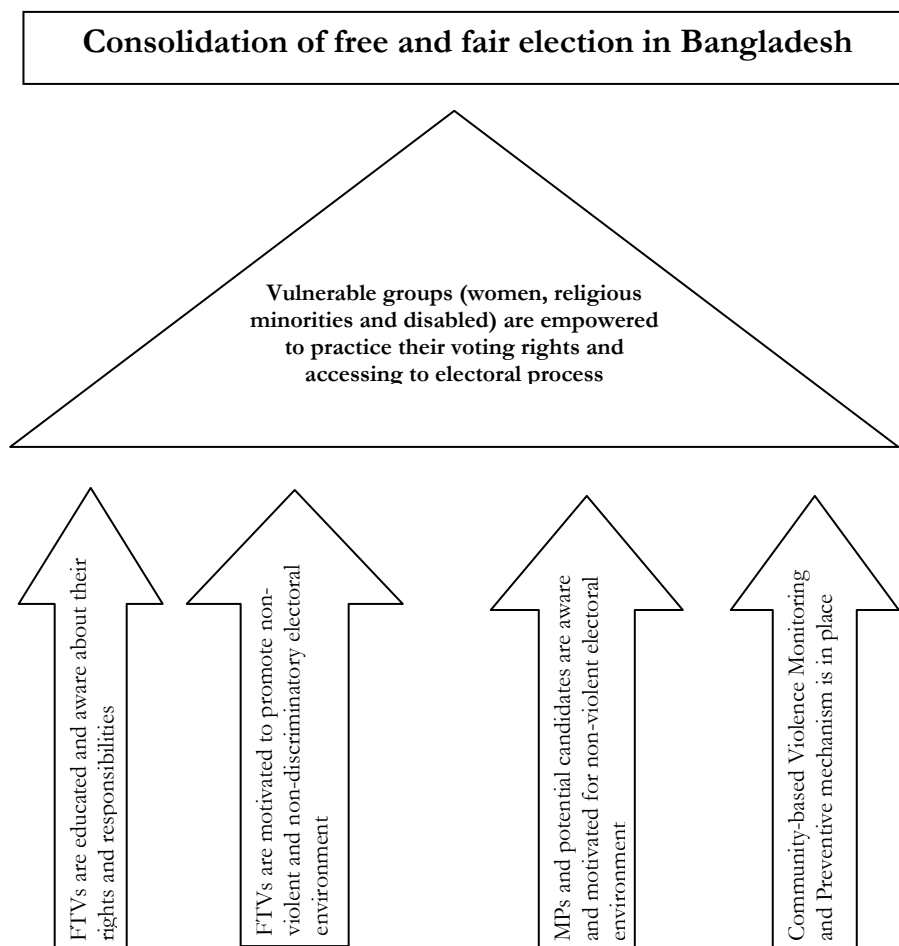
The whole range of activities under this project would be implemented through partnership. Implementation approach of MAAPSI is predominantly guided by partnership approach with local level non-government organizations. Already 40 local organizations of the proposed six districts or connected with MAAPSI with various capacity including previous relevant working experiences (ref: overview in the following table). Out of those 40 organizations MAAPSI will select most competent, in terms of relevant working experience and organizational capacity, organizations for implementing this project. Few of them were involved in designing phase of this project. One organization will be selected and contracted from each district. After completing the formal regularities MAAPSI will have the leading and coordinating role in the whole project implementation. It will be directly reportable to the Donors. The range of MAAPSI involvement will reveal negotiating with **Donor**, developing the implementation strategy, preparing detailed work plan, orientation. We have a long experience of working with election issue ranging from voter education to pre-election, Election Day and post election monitoring even in this same proposed project area. We have strong foothold in the proposed project area, which includes knowledge about the locality and political trend matrix, working experience etc. The following table is about MAAPSI is working experience in the proposed project area with the some of the networking partner organizations:

Year	Activities	Place	Implémenter
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ General Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Pre-Election Monitoring</li> <li>• Voter Education (Postering, Signature Campaign, Rally)</li> </ul>	Jessore-1 Jessore-2 Jessore-3 Jessore-4 Jessore-5 Jessore-6	MAAPSI and Swapno Sahajjya Shangstha (SSS), Jessore
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Union Parishad Election day Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Pre-election monitoring</li> <li>▪ Voter education campaign</li> </ul>	Aarihazar Upazilla Sonargaon Upazilla Sadar Upazilla Rupgong Upazilla Avoinagor Upazilla Keshobpur Upazilla Sadar Upazilla Monirumpur Upazilla (48 Union) of Jessore	MAAPSI and Swapno Sahajjya Shangstha (SSS), Jessore
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voter Education</li> </ul>	Narail-1 &2	MAAPSI and Nobanno
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Union Parishad Election day Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Pre-election monitoring</li> <li>▪ Voter education campaign</li> </ul>	Kalia Lohagora Norail Sadar (28 Union) of Narail	MAAPSI and Nobanno
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Pre-Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Voter Education (Postering, Signature Campaign, Rally)</li> </ul>	Satkhira- 1 Satkhira-2 Satkhira-3 Satkhira-4 Satkhira-5	MAAPSI and MMC
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Pre-Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Voter Education (Postering, Signature Campaign, Rally)</li> </ul>	Satkhira 1 to 6	MAAPSI and MMC
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Pre-Election Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Voter Education (Postering, Signature Campaign, Rally)</li> </ul>	Harinakundo Sadar Katchandpur Moheshpur	MAAPSI and Unnoyon Dhara, Jhenaidah

		Sailokupa (35 Union) of Jhenaidah	
2001 and 2003	▪ Election Monitoring and Voter education	Khulna 1 to 6	MAAPSI and Swapno Sahajjo Shongstha

This approach of implementation through local partner organization will ease the whole implementation process. Moreover MMC- is absolutely a media organization who can be responsible for all media related works including message dissemination.

Our previous experience of partnership approach reveals that it can produce more qualitative and sustainable outputs in the project area as well as to the target group if the direct implementer remains close to the target population. Moreover, since these organizations have comparative advantages of being rooted to the community they are very much capable to build community confidence very quickly. These partner organizations are working there for a quite long time and will be continuing there. This will have a long-term sustainability implication. These organizations are known and trusted by the community and consequently they will be in a better position to offer any thing new. It is assumed community would be more confident and encouraged to cooperate with them.



**Approach:** Targeted voters will safeguard their own voting rights and also contribute for promoting a non-violent electoral environment

- Prevalence of electoral violence;
- Lack of initiatives both by the candidates and supporter groups for minimizing the violence rather they facilitate to win the election;
- Absence of government initiatives to educate and aware new generation voters about their voting rights and responsibilities as a citizen
- Vulnerable groups are very much prone to be routine-victimised by political violence

MAAPSI has its own internal monitoring and evaluation unit and would be followed in general and quarterly reporting and semi-annual follow-up meeting would be arranged for evaluation. Reporting format, time line, orientation for the format will be developed in consultation with local partner organization so that uniformity can be followed and care would be taken so that it does not apply extra burden for them to report. At the end of six months a mid-term internal evaluation would be commissioned which will help to rethink the approach. MAAPSI will strictly monitor PNGO's performance by their own monitoring cell.

Local partners in six separate districts would be involved actively in implementing the project. MAAPSI will lead in decision making and introduce national context while local partners will lead in community aspect and coordinate with local stakeholders. Partners' involvement in project implementation is explicitly mentioned in the detailed action plan.

In the MAAPSI the following team is proposed for implementation coordinating with local partner organizations for the proposed project:

- |                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Programme Director (15% time)      | - 1 |
| 2. Programme Manager (25% time)       | - 1 |
| 3. Project Coordinator                | - 1 |
| 4. Programme Officer (Implementation) | - 1 |
| 5. Programme Officer (Training)       | - 1 |
| 6. Programme Officer (Advocacy)       | - 1 |
| 7. Finance Manager (25% time)         | - 1 |
| 8. Accounts Officer                   | - 1 |

While this is the case for MAAPSI, following is total staff would be required for six districts level including (ED's Salary 50% time )for partner organizations:

- |                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| 1. Project Coordinators | - 6   |
| 2. Programme Organizers | - 12  |
| 3. Volunteer Trainers   | - 162 |
| 4. A media Centre       | - 1   |
| 5. Media Activists      | -12   |
| 6. Cultural Groups      |       |

Duration and action plan

---

- The duration of the action will be **60 months**.

Budget

**\$ 22, 85,714**

Year 01															
SI no.	Activity	Months												Implementing body	
		Semester 01						Semester 02							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	Preparation for project inception, local partners selection														MAAPSI
	Partnership finalization with local NGOs, partnership statement signature, orientation for local partners on project in Dhaka														MAAPSI and local partner NGOs
	Staff recruitment (national and local) and orientation on project in Dhaka														MAAPSI and local partner NGOs
1.1.1	<b>Organize Press Conference for mass dissemination and sensitization</b>														
	i. One press conference in Dhaka on Project Inception														MAAPSI
	ii. District level Press Conference in 6 project districts on Project Inception														Respective local partner NGO
1.1.2	<b>Conduct a rapid assessment about the number of First Time Voters in the project areas</b>														
	i. Preparation for conducting Rapid Assessment about volume of FTVs														MAAPSI
	ii. Conducting the Rapid Assessment about volume of FTVs in project areas														Local partner NGOs
1.1.3	<b>Explore First Time Voters' (FTVs) perception on election</b>														
	i. Preparation for exploring FTV's perception on election through drawing														MAAPSI and local partner NGOs
	ii. Explore FTV's perception on election through														Local partner



	i. Preparation for the assessment of number of potential MP candidates for the election														MAAPSI and local PNGOs
	ii. Conducting the Assessment of number of potential MP candidates for the election														MAAPSI and local PNGOs
2.1.2	<b>Conducting a 1-day sharing meeting with potential MP candidates and law enforcing agencies</b>														Local PNGOs and MAAPSI
2.1.3	<b>Print and dissemination of the declaration publicly in respective constituency</b>														MAAPSI and local PNGOs
2.1.4	<b>Organize Radio and TV talk shows</b>														MAAPSI and local PNGOs
2.2.1	<b>Organize constituency-based mini round-table meeting</b>														MAAPSI and MMC
	i. Preparation for mini round table at constituency level														Local PNGOs
	ii. Organize mini round table at constituency level														Local PNGOs
2.2.2	<b>Formation of Community-based Violence Monitoring and Prevention (CVMP) committee</b>														Local PNGOs
2.2.3	<b>Newspapers scanning at national level</b>													MAAPSI	MAAPSI
2.2.4	<b>Organize constituency-based CVMP findings follow-up and advocacy meeting</b>														Local PNGOs and MAAPSI
2.2.5	<b>Organize national level dialogue</b>														MAAPSI and local PNGOs
	<b>Programme monitoring and internal evaluation</b>														MAAPSI and local PNGOs
	<b>Reporting</b>														
	i. quarterly progress reporting from local PNGOs to MAAPSI														Local PNGOs
	ii. quarterly progress reporting from MAAPSI to the EU														MAAPSI

<b>For the following years:</b>					
	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Semester 3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Implementing body</b>
	Refresher orientation for the YPF members				Maapsi, local PNGOs and YPF
	Revise the operational guideline for the YPF				Local NGOs and YPF
	Refresher training for the CVMP committee				Local NGOs and CVMP
	Workshop with stakeholders about lessons learning of CVMP				CVMP and local PNGOs
	Use of VCD cassettes for raising mass awareness				MMC and other Local PNGOs
	Further follow-up with political leaders about their commitments				Local PNGOs, YPF and CVMP
	Follow-up advocacy work on government initiative for educating FTVs				MAAPSI and local PNGOs
	Initiate media advocacy on government initiative for educating FTVs				Maapsi

## Expected impact on target groups

Very specifically two fold activities have been designed in the proposed project. One aims to mobilize and empower the target vulnerable groups (i.e. women, religious minorities and disabled persons) with particular age ranged 18 – 22 years and another focuses on the potential MP candidates, their supporter groups and community people. As availability of information can empower a person in taking any informed decision therefore, in this project the target group will be empowered with information and education about voter's rights and responsibilities, importance of selecting competent representatives, ensuring equal participation of all tiers of population for healthier democratic practice. The target population will be able to know about the background of political process, form of government, linkage between different tiers of government process, how to take informed and right decision in representative selection etc. The vulnerable youth groups will work as a peer group for facilitating and animating other youths and thus enable their access to electoral process. They will be awareness which will prevent them from selecting unfit candidates in the election. Since the new generation voter groups will form Youth Peace Forum for promoting non-violent environment a regular follow-up will be functional. Moreover, Community-based Violence Monitoring and Prevention committee will pull all walks of people including the victims and perpetrators therefore an accountable environment will emerge which will lead to fewer incidences of women and religious minority oppression.

Since a community-based violence monitoring and preventive mechanism will be developed and oriented with partners this will help them in longer-term to follow and further undertake necessary activities. This will help them to design individual project intervention in cases of necessity. Partners' capacity will be enhanced through capacity building training which will ultimately contribute to keeping the youth groups alive and functional after phasing out of this project

## 2.2 Publications and other outputs

SL	Publications, materials	Quantity (pieces/copies)
01	Posters on various messages i.e. vote casting process, message on non-violence, tolerance, importance of vulnerable groups' access to electoral process, respect to each other, basic rights and responsibilities of a voter etc. (2000 pcs X 2 issues X 27 constituencies)	108,000
02	Leaflets on various messages i.e. benefits of peaceful election environment, points on tolerance for promoting peace and respect to each other, basic rights and responsibilities of a voter etc. (5000 pcs X 27 constituencies )	135,000
03	Training Manual for the FTVs (60,000 copies for 27 constituencies and Dhaka )	60,000
04	Operational Guidelines for Youth Peach Forum (YPF) (54 copies for 27 constituencies)	54
05	Declaration/Commitment made by the potential MP candidates (54,000 copies for 27 constituencies)	54,000
06	VCD cassette with traditional folk song on (5,000 pcs for 27 constituencies and Dhaka)	5,000

### 2.3 Multiplier effects

As described in the whole project proposal there would be a very enthusiastic and active youth forum formed with 10 first time voters (comprised of 5 male and 5 female voters) in each union who will work as a peer group to promote the lessons of this project among the whole community and society with their volunteerism spirit out of their motivation. Since initiatives will be taken to create a congenial rapport between the community and this group therefore their work could be continued with local partner organization's guidance and follow-up support. This will not require any major monetary cost. This group's good work will be portrayed in the local and national newspapers which will further motivate them to carry on with their work of civic awareness.

Since the new generation voters are predominantly high in figure and mostly responsible in causing fake votes, creating violence in different constituencies therefore if they could be turned into a constructive forces and successfully educated with their roles and responsibilities in democracy and country building initiative then the idea could be replicated countrywide in any electoral events later on.

Government of the Election Commission could also think about on priority how to gear up and improve the whole idea in motivating this huge powerful force into promotion of democratic environment both in local level and national level.

Since initial approach would be made through this project to invite government's attention on the importance of educating new generation voters with correct information and message therefore, it is expected that this advocacy work will continue. MAAPSI feels interested to continue that policy work and this work as a part of its Youth Promotion Programme. If this national level initiative is finally in place from government side in an objective manner then this overwhelming youth force could be transformed as change agents in a short time.

### 2.4 Short- and long-term impact

---

This is not an income generating project. This project will try to motivate FTVs to carry on with their work for democracy and civic education. We intend to build their capacity to the extent that they will think about ways of achieving financial sustainability themselves. Also the impact of achieving of YPF will create confidence of the local authorities/government members who may incorporate their activities within local government.

- (a) Institutional level (*Will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of action outcomes?*)

The Youth Peace Forum (YPF) can ultimately be turned as a local new voters club or civic sense club where some terms and conditions can be developed for future running of the institution. Regular follow-up voter awareness, non-violence and peace promotion initiatives could be undertaken by the YPF with the community support.

Non-partisan, neutral and senior citizens could be inducted in the institution as the advisor who will from time-to-time guide the institution for creating a bridge between community and the institution in a longer term.

Through the project the forum will be able to achieve the community acceptance and thus ownership of the society through their peace promotion work and education intervention on non-discriminatory and fair election as a long-term effect.

The CVMP will be built only absolutely community participation. The guideline will be sharpened along the gained experiences. There will be follow-up with the lessons learnt from the CVMP and institutional strengthening initiatives will be undertaken leading towards long-term community-level anchoring.

(b) Policy level (*What structural impact will the action have - e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?*)

Through two national level dialogues the working experience and successes of the model programme of educating FTVs about their rights and responsibilities will be presented and disseminated widely. Maapsi based on its prior experience and focuses on youth issue will continue the work targeting policy makers for adopting relevant policy intervention for educating the FTVs nationally on civic rights. Government will feel encouraged to initiate education/awareness raising intervention through the national election commission for the first time new generation voters for promoting a healthy democratic practice

Government would be insisted to introduce a ranking system of violent and non-violent scenario/experience of each constituency and publicly produce it. Then the politicians and law enforcing agencies of the respective constituency would feel encouraged to be in the top of ranking.



