

## The Relationship of National and International Environmental NGOs in Bangladesh and Their Role in Wetland Conservation

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**ABSTRACT:** Biodiversity degradation, loss of wetlands and arsenic pollution are becoming the major environmental threats of Bangladesh. Huge number of population, corruption and lack of capacity of the governmental agencies are deteriorating the over environmental condition of Bangladesh. This paper reports the findings of NGOs and their role in protection of wetlands of Bangladesh. Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) and its daughter organization Department of Environment (DoE) are comparatively weak in power and capacity in comparison to other ministries. To fill up this gap, a number of environmental NGOs (ENGOS) have emerged in Bangladesh after the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. ENGOS are actively involved in the environmental sectors of Bangladesh by doing research, advocacy, accompanying activities and as pressure group as well. ENGOS are implementing several projects with government and international donor agencies. Their role to protect and manage wetland ecosystem and biodiversity is very praise-worthy. Bangladeshi ENGOS have very good relations with international ENGOS and donor agencies. Most of the Bangladeshi ENGOS (research based) are dependent on the foreign aids. But the prominent accompanying ENGOS are not interested to seek governmental and international donors' supports to uphold their independence and to raise their voice against environmental damages taking by governmental and private projects.

**Key words:** ENGOS, Wetland protection, Environmental policy, Bangladesh

### INTRODUCTION

Serious environmental degradation has taken place in Bangladesh in recent years. It is apprehended that at the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Bangladesh will face serious environmental degradation (Alam, 1988). There are many dimensions of this degradation. Urban air pollution, ground water contamination with arsenic, surface water pollution, encroachment of rivers and other water bodies, improper disposal of industrial, medical, and household waste, deforestation, loss of open space, loss of bio-diversity, and noise pollution are just a few examples. In many cases, the extent of degradation has reached crisis proportions (Islam, 2002).

NGO (Non Governmental Organization) is a very widely known term all over the world. It is very difficult to define NGO but in the broadest sense NGOs mean non governmental, non profitable organizations which main vision is to serve the poor and disadvantaged groups of the society. NGOs are involved with micro-credit, environment, family planning, education, health and sanitation, human right and many other sectors of the society. The donor agencies like the World Bank, UNDP, DFID, CIDA, USAID etc. are encouraging collaboration with international and national NGOs especially in developing worlds.

The environmental NGOs which are also termed as ENGOS are working with the

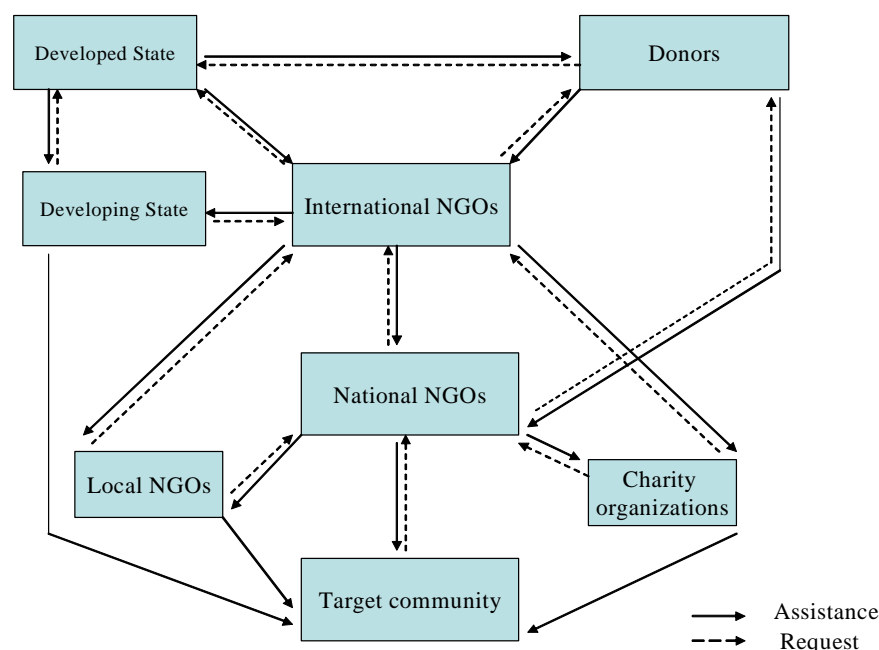
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governments and developing agencies to protect the environmental pollutions and biodiversity in many countries of the world (Fig.1). The 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm represented the landmark in international environment policy. The Period from 1975 to 1980 has been labelled the "social movement" phase in the rise of environmentalism, since it was marked by the increasing politicization of the environmental NGOs (Jamison, 1996).

After the Rio Earth Summit, 1992, the environment NGOs got rapid momentum all over the world. The Rio Earth summit was attended by over 22,000 NGO representatives from 9000 NGOs all over the world (Princen and Finger, 1994). By this time the main achievement of the environmental movement is to create a positive situation and as a result governments are expected to pay much attention to environmental protection issues (Carter, 2001). There are probably more and bigger NGOs in Bangladesh than in any other country of a similar population in the world (Ahmed, 2003). NGO activity in Bangladesh began in the aftermath of the devastating cyclone of the late-1970s and against the backdrop of the war for independence culminating in 1971 (Lewis,

1992). Failure of the national government to successfully operate and manage relief and rehabilitation programs both after independence and following the 1974 flood led the external donors to conclude that the state was inefficient, probably corrupt, and incapable of implementing effective programs. This compelled the donor community including foreign NGOs to look for alternative means of channelling development aid and disaster assistance (Lewis 1992).

After the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, a number of ENGOS and environmental advocacy groups emerged in Bangladesh. By this time, ENGOS (both specialized and not specialized in environment) have formed a coalition, namely Coalition of Environmental NGOs (CEN). Many of these NGOs have collaborated with the Government in formulating NEMAP (National environmental management action plan). Some of these are now engaged in implementation of NEMAP related and other environmental projects, such as SEMP. However, it is clear that these efforts and projects are not proving adequate for the environmental challenges which are facing Bangladesh. The environment in Bangladesh is still deteriorating despite the projects (Islam, 2002).



**Fig.1. Relationship among Donor agencies, Gos, NGOs, charity organizations and target community**

In Bangladesh understanding of the environment has developed in last few decades. In fact the awareness builds up and conservation effort started in 1980's when several developments took place (Islam, 2002). During that period a separate Ministry called Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) and The Department of Environment (DoE) have been established. The Department of Environment (DoE) the daughter organisation of MoEF is responsible for the implementation of the adopted policies (Mahjabeen, 2002). Several Environmental acts have been passed (Table 1). Government also formed environmental courts at Dhaka and Chittagong.

A large number of case studies and assessments on NGOs of Bangladesh have been conducted in Bangladesh (Fruttero and Gauri, 2005). But the role of ENGOs on wetland management and their relationships to the government and to donors and international ENGOs have not been addressed. So, the aims of the present study are to explore the role of environmental NGOs to protect the wetlands of Bangladesh their relation with governmental agencies, donor agencies and international ENGOs.

## MATERIALS & METHODS

The study was designed to gather information from ENGOs personnel and representatives of regulating agencies as well. The International ENGOs, national ENGOs and governmental agencies were selected on the basis of their involvements environmental and conservation issues. Semi-structured interview technique was

selected to collect the data. A questionnaire was formulated to conduct the interviews and collect the data. Probes were also used to develop the deeper understanding of the relevant issues.

A total of 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted (Table 2). Prior to the interview the participants were provided with a brief outline of the project aims and a copy of the questions. These help them to understand the theme of the study. All The interviews were taken in the office premises of the interviewees. The duration of each interview was 20-30 minutes on an average. The discussions were tape recorded with the permission of the respondents and after that transferred those into transcript forms. The data which were obtained from the interviews were processed using framework analysis as mentioned by Ritchie and Spencer (1994). This analysis involved systematically coding, grouping and summarising descriptions and providing a coherent organising thematic framework to explain (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995; Holloway, 1997; Strauss, 1987).

The present study found several types of ENGOs are working in environmental sector of Bangladesh and which may be categorized as follows (Table 3). Several international ENGOs (Group 1) are working in Bangladesh with collaboration of the governmental agencies and national and local ENGOs. The research based ENGOs (Group 2) are thinking that the government is doing nothing in environmental conservation. So, they formulate the project proposals and they work in those areas. They are

**Table 1. Key environmental legislations in Bangladesh (modification of Huq, 2002)**

Year	Legislation	Primary objectives
1970	Water pollution control ordinance	An ordinance to provide for the control, preservation and abatement of pollution of waters of Bangladesh
1977	The environment pollution control ordinance	An ordinance to provide for control, prevention and abatement of pollution of the environment of Bangladesh
1995	The Bangladesh environment conservation act	An act to provide for conservation of the environment, improvement of environmental standards and control and mitigation of environmental pollution
1997	The environmental conservation rules	To exercise the powers conferred by section 20 of the Bangladesh Environmental Conservation Act, 1995, the Government of Bangladesh passed this rule
2000	The environment court act	An act to provide for the establishment of environment courts and matters incidental thereto

also jointly implementing the governmental projects. BCAS and CNRS are the good examples of those types of ENGOs. On the other hand the pressure groups (Group 3) are trying to put pressure on the government because they find that in some sectors (like wetland conservation , pollution control and biodiversity protection) the government is doing nothing . More over the government is deteriorating the conditions. So they

are trying to create pressure on the government to solve the problem. They are also trying to motivate the people. Some cases the government is accepting there ideas. BAPA, BELA (Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association), Ongikar Bangladesh are the examples of such types of NGOs.

Besides these some interviewees also identified some other ENGOs they are only

**Table 2. Details of interview respondents and their role within the organization**

Organizations	Main activities	Interviewees
Greenpeace, UK	Environmental campaigner	Campaigner
IIED ( <i>International Institute for Environment and Development</i> ),UK	Policy research and facilitator	Director
ACOPS ( <i>Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea</i> ),UK	Policy research, advisory, public awareness	Director
IUCN ( <i>The World Conservation Union</i> )	Conservator	Country Representative
BAPA ( <i>Bangladesh Poribesh Andolan</i> )	Campaigner	Vice- president
CNRS ( <i>Centre for Natural Resources Studies</i> )	Research and conservator	Executive Director
BCAS ( <i>Bangladesh Centre for Advanced studies</i> )	Research and conservator	President
FEJB ( <i>Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh</i> )	Campaigner	Chairman
Winrock International	Research and conservator	Country representative
Action Aid , Bangladesh	Advisory, public awareness	Programme Officer
Ongikar Bangladesh Foundation	Campaigner, advisory	Chief director
Sundar Jibon, Bangladesh	Campaigner	President
DoE ( <i>Department of Environment</i> ),Bangladesh	Regulator	Assistant Director

**Table 3. Category of interview NGOs respondents**

Organizations		
Gr I	Gr II	Gr III
International Environmental NGOs	Bangladeshi Environmental NGOs ( research based)	Bangladeshi Environmental NGOs ( campaigners)
Greenpeace IIED ACOPS IUCN Actionaid Winrock International	BCAS CNRS	BAPA FEJB  Ongikar Bangladesh Foundation Sundar Jibon

operating for money either from the donors or from the government. They do not have their own objectives. They want to work on every issue like wetland conservations, child education, women empowerment and others depending on the availability of grants (Haque, 2004). So they are only for money making. This observation supports the findings of Ebdon (1995) which mentioned that some small NGOs select those activities which could be easily funded by the donors and the government.

The partnership and collaboration have been expanded among different stakeholders including international financial institutions, foreign corporations, government agencies, consulting firms, academic and research institutions, local governments, pressure groups, and non-government organizations or NGOs (Siddiqi and Oever, 1998; Paoletto, 2000). Most of the surveyed international ENGOs (except Greenpeace and ACOPS) are working in different sectors of the environment. Surveyed international ENGOs mentioned that they never give emphasis on the size of the country, population size and political situation to work in developing countries. However Greenpeace representative pointed out that they give emphasis on the economic growth of the country to start work there. As a result Greenpeace is working in Thailand, China and India but not in Bangladesh due to the rapid economic growth of those countries which has a significant relationship with environmental pollution. Most of the surveyed international ENGOs mentioned that their involvements with the developing countries NGOs depend on the

particular environmental issue in which they are already involved. The present study also found that most of research and advocacy based Bangladeshi ENGOs have international partners such as donor agencies, the universities and international ENGOs like IUCN, Winrock, Actionaid and others. International conferences and workshops would be the important pathways to bring the NGOs together (Princen and Finger, 1994). Most of the interviewee Bangladeshi and international ENGOs mentioned that came together by attending international conferences, direct personnel communication, contact by email, mail and telephone (Table 4).

Strong personnel communication is very important to start joint collaboration mentioned by ACOPS representative. He informed that they are working in Western Indian Ocean. But the initiative was taken by the Foreign Minister of one of the African countries. She met DG of ACOPS in one of the conferences and then the minister asked that why ACOPS was not working in Indian Ocean. After that ACOPS has started to work there with the collaboration of the governmental agencies and NGOs.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

A large number of Bangladeshi NGOs is dependant on foreign fund (Hashemi, 1996; Alam, 1988; Streeten, 1999; Montgomery *et al.*, 1996). Present study found that the grants of the donors and western ENGOs are the basic source of fund for most of the Bangladeshi ENGOs. This study found that most of research based Bangladeshi ENGOs have very good relation with different

**Table 4. Thematic chart relating to development of relation among international NGOs, Bangladeshi NGOs and Donors**

Group of ENGOs	Relation	Mode of contact
I	We believe on international network. So we want to work with foreign NGOs in different countries. We also give emphasis on where the contact is stronger, where expertise is required and the area which we are involve in.	International conferences, Personal communication, email, mail, telephone etc.
II	Bangladeshi NGOs have good relation with international NGOs. Several projects are being implemented jointly by national and international NGOs.	Workshops, International conferences Personal communication, email, mail, telephone.
III	Bangladeshi campaigning NGOs have also relation with some international campaigning NGOs	International conferences, Personal communication, email, mail, telephone

donor agencies like DFID, CIDA, DANIDA, USAID, UNDP, World Bank and others. Some of the interviewees stressed that all the NGOs are not receiving foreign funds which is also supported by Hashemi (1996). Hashemi (1996) found that 84% of the total foreign allocation for the NGOs is going to only 15 large NGOs. This study found that in some cases NGOs get direct funds to implement the wetland and ecosystem conservation and pollution control programme of the donors. In some other cases they identify specific problem of wetlands area and formulate the project proposal to mitigate the problem and then seek the fund to the donor agencies. Sometime donor agencies identify the problem and call for the bid and international and national NGOs participate on those. For example USAID called an international bid to implement the wetland management and conservation programme in Hakaluki haor at Sylhet, Bangladesh. The international ENGO Winrock made consortium with three Bangladeshi NGOs named CNRS, BCAS and CARITAS. All these NGOs jointly formulated the project proposal and jointly participate in the bidding process and won the bid. A few surveyed NGOs urged that the donor agencies are only interested to work with large NGOs. They claimed that they submitted several proposals as per the guideline of the donor agencies but their project proposals were unsuccessful and most of the time no reason was given for the rejection.

On the other hand companying NGOs BAPA is not interested in seeking foreign or governmental fund. BAPA representative pointed "Member fees are the main funding source of BAPA. We never seek fund from international donors and government because we believe in that case we would be depended on them." BAPA thinks if they depend on such funds they cannot raise their voice freely and they have to negotiate with government and donors on some issues. BAPA also claimed that they never accept the donation from the polluters, encroachers and those who are damaging the environment.

This study observed that BEN (Bangladesh environmental Network) is also a source of funding for NGOs of Bangladesh. BEN is a platform of non resident Bangladeshis (Islam, 2002). They

collect funds from the non-residence Bangladeshis and from this donation BEN helps the NGOs of Bangladesh to promote their activities. For example BEN directly helps BAPA on monthly basis to maintain their office and some other regular expenditure. BEN directly helped BAPA to organize the first and second International Conferences on Bangladesh Environment named ICBEN, 2000 and 2002, in Dhaka. BEN also helped Ongikar Bangladesh to organize the "International Tipaimukh Dam Conference" at Dhaka in 2005.

The present study found a good collaboration between Bangladeshi national and local NGOs. All the surveyed NGOs are related with other national and local NGOs. However sometimes NGOs non cooperation or jealousy affect on their activities. As for instance giving programmes at same time by two organizations fail to attract the attention of public and the governmental attention as well. Some surveyed NGOs complained against some other NGOs those who are working in the same field. This observation supports the findings of Rawcliffe (1998) who found that NGOs are in direct competition with each other for campaign issues, media attraction and sponsorship.

All the surveyed NGOs mentioned that people are very cooperative to ENGO activities. They also stated that most of the people are very poor and illiterate. The general mass people of Bangladesh are trying to meet their basic material needs. They, therefore, pay little attention to the environmental amenities (Salequzzaman and Stocker, 2001). More over some of the local elites and influential groups are illegally taking the opportunities over the common resources (like public wetlands and water bodies) and damaging the natural resources by over exploitation. These groups are managing the political leaders and governmental officers by giving bribes (Sobhan and Ahmed, 1980; Clapham, 1985 and Ahmad *et al.*, 1994). So, these beneficiary groups have become the major opponent of the NGOs activities at field level.

Cannon (1996) reported a high tension between NGOs and the government in some health programs in Uganda funded by Oxfam. The scenarios are also more or less similar in

Bangladesh. Most of the respondent ENGOs pointed out that the GO-NGO relationship is not always friendly. Most of the surveyed ENGOs stressed that the government officials think that what they are doing to protect the environment and biodiversity is right. The government officials most of the time do not attend the meeting which is organized by the NGOs. They are not interested to share their views with the ENGOs and most of the time they don't include the ENGOs to implement the development and environmental protection projects. There are a few exceptions as well. The government seek the help of ENGOs to formulate National Environmental Management Action Plan (NEMAP) and ENGOs took part on that (Rahman, 2002). ENGOs also get cooperation from some of the local field officers to run their projects.

In 1991, Government of Bangladesh created NGO Affairs Bureau to provide one stop services to NGOs such as registration, project approval, fund disbursement and so on (Haque, 2004). All the NGOs who are working with foreign funds must be enrolled with NGO Affairs Bureau. Most of the respondent ENGOs mentioned that the NGO Affairs Bureau acting both as regulator and promoter. NGOs need permission to operate a project with donor's fund and they also need permission to disburse the foreign money (Fig. 2).

Responded national ENGOs pointed out that sometime they face problem to get the permission from NGO Affairs Bureau. Sometime there is unnecessary delay to give the permission. Some officials of NGO Affairs Bureau are also corrupt. Whereas, the international ENGOs mentioned that they did not face any problem with NGO Affairs Bureau. Some of interviewee ENGOs think that the monitoring of ENGO Affairs Bureau is essential because some the NGOs (general NGOs) are getting fund from different unknown foreign donors and these NGOs are not enrolled with NGO Affairs Bureau. Government suspect that these types of NGOs spending the money in politics and terrorist activities. However, the present study did not find the political affiliations of ENGOs. On the other hand ENGOs which are only dependant on local funds must be enrolled with Social Welfare Department (Fig.3).

The surveyed Bangladeshi ENGOs mentioned that air pollution at Dhaka city, ground water contamination with arsenic, agricultural soil contamination with arsenic rich irrigated ground water, surface water pollution with industrial ischarges, encroachment of rivers and wetlands, improper disposal of industrial, medical, and household waste, deforestation, loss of open space, loss of bio-diversity, and noise pollution are very common in Bangladesh. But wetland ecosystem

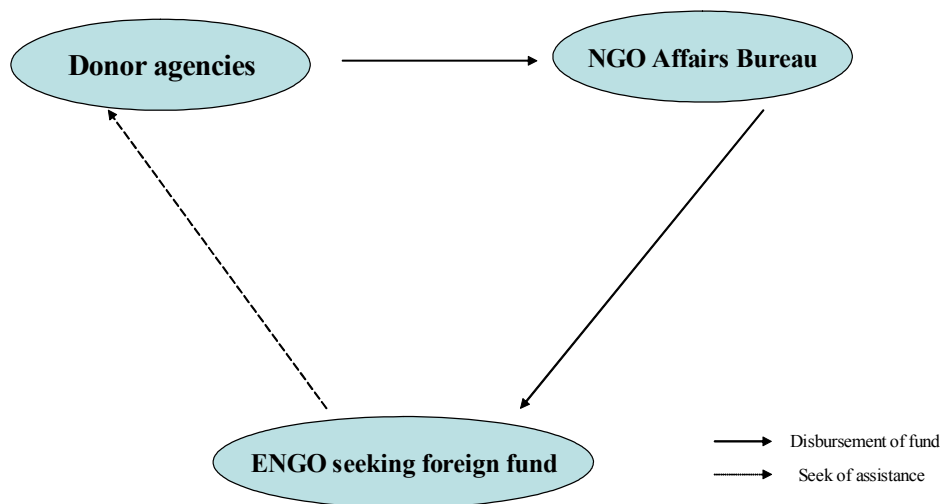
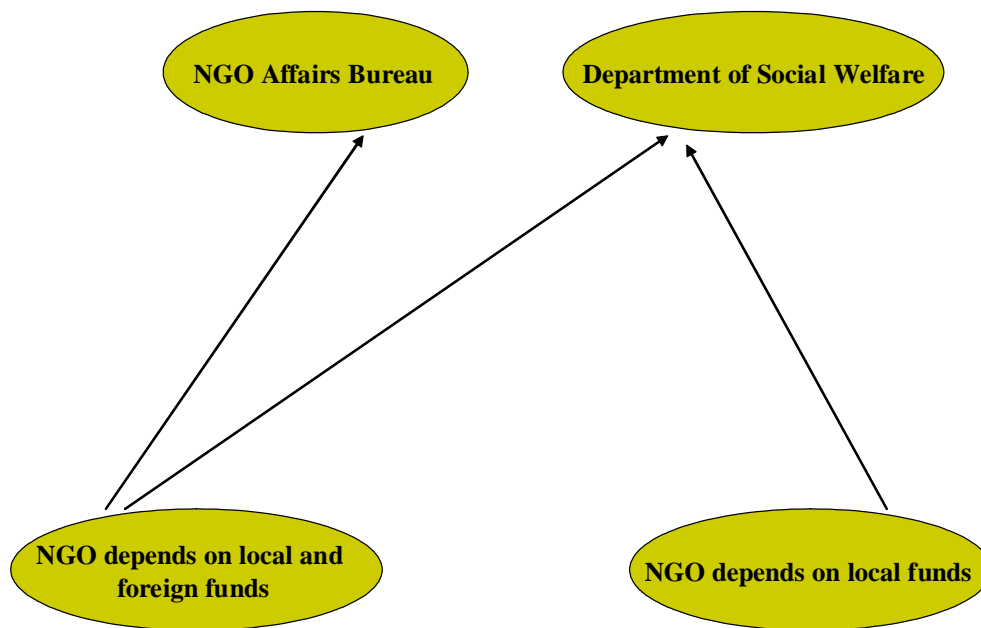


Fig. 2. Route of receiving foreign funds for a Bangladeshi ENGO



**Fig. 3. Registration process of a NGO in Bangladesh**

disruptions and arsenic pollution is the two major environmental problems all over country. Representatives of international ENGOs (IUCN and IIED) also agreed with this. They mentioned that water pollution with industrial discharge and noise pollution are the problems with some urban areas but wetland encroachment and arsenic pollutions have captured nearly 90% of the country.

The ENGOs respondents mentioned that the country has not enough natural and mineral resources. The main objective of the government is to provide food and shelter for the people. As a result government's main emphasis is on the industrialization, infrastructural development and urbanization rather than environmental control and wetland protection. People need places for housing so they are filling the wetlands. People are converting wetlands into agricultural lands for cultivation. Wetland and ecosystem conservation legislations are not implementing properly like other legislations in Bangladesh due to corruption, inefficiency and lack of capability of implementing agencies (Lewis, 1992; Islam, 1999; Mahjabeen, 2002). All the respondents Bangladeshi ENGOs and representatives of IIED and IUCN agreed with this. For the example BAPA respondent shared one of their bad experiences with the government officials to implement the wetland

protection legislation. BAPA got information that this law was not implemented many places of the country. So BAPA sent the gazette to all the DCs ( Deputy Commissioners) and TNOs ( Thana Nirbahi Officer) but they responded BAPA "Thank you very much for sending us the gazette but we are unable to take any action as the government did not instruct us to implement this law". So passing of law in parliament and implementation is not same. Government's commitment and strong supervision are mandatory to implement the legislation. On the other hand mass people are illiterate, so they are not aware of their rights. As a result they are not organised and it is easy to misguide them. More over most of people do not know the impact pollution on them and the importance of wetlands and conservation of nature.

The presence of high level of Arsenic (<50 µ/L) in groundwater of Bangladesh has been detected in 1980's. It is not an anthropogenic reason. The ground rock of Bangladesh is enriched with arsenic. Some scientists claimed that due to withdrawal of excess groundwater for drinking and irrigational purpose, these ground rock is exposed to air. As a result the arsenic is combining with oxygen and coming up with water as arsenate. This arsenate is very dangerous for human-being. According to World Health



Organization (WHO), the permissible limit of As in drinking water is 10 µ/L. 80% of groundwater of the country has been contaminated with arsenic. Nearly 90 million Bangladeshi are now at risk from arsenic related several diseases including cancer. The ENGOs representatives mentioned that the economy of Bangladesh is totally depended on agriculture. Paddy culture is the main agricultural sub-sector as rice is the staple food for Bangladeshi. So, arsenic rich ground water is using for irrigation to produce high yield varieties of rice. The presence of arsenic in irrigation water results in significant increase of arsenic concentration in the irrigated soil; particularly in the top layer (up to about 150 mm). Abedin *et al.* (2002) suggested that arsenic can be easily translocated to paddy shoot. Since rice straw is widely used as cattle feed in Bangladesh and India, high arsenic in rice stem and leaf (*i.e.*, in straw) may result in adverse health impacts on cattle and increase human arsenic exposure via the plant-animal-human pathway. Arsenic is also found in several vegetables like potatoes, spinach, brinjal and okra (Alam and Rahman, 2003). So, the whole ecosystem of Bangladesh is now in danger with arsenic contamination.

DoE is the responsible authority to implement the environmental legislations and monitor the situation at field level. The respondent national ENGOs said that DoE is severely lacking in manpower, budget and logistics and they have no capacity to monitor the situation which is similar to the opinion of Chowdhury (2002) and Islam (2002). DoE have only six offices at six divisional headquarters. There are very few inspectors who are working those offices and it is very difficult for them to monitor the overall environmental situation and implement the environmental laws all over the country. More over involvement of stakeholders with implementation process is very poor.

This study found that the research based ENGOs are involved with identifying the problems in wetlands conservation by doing active research. They are implementing several projects [*e.g.* MACH (Management of Aquatic Ecosystem through community Husbandry)] project which implementing by BCAS, Caritas, CNRS and Winrock) at field level with the collaboration of donars, international ENGOs, governmental

agencies or by themselves. All the national ENGOs are involved to organise workshops, seminars, symposium to disseminate their results and to ascertain new problems. Some of them also arrange training programmes. On the other hand all the surveyed companying ENGOs ( *e.g.* BAPA, FEJB, Sundar Jibon) are involved with various activities like demonstrations, organizing press conferences and agitation to draw public attention and to protest governmental and private developmental projects which are damaging the wetlands and environment . They are also acting as pressure groups on the government to implement the environmental rules and regulations. BAPA's representative reported some of their achievements on wetland and river protection issues. One of their important achievements is "Buriganga Bachao Andolon" or "Safe the river Buriganga". Buriganga is the only river of Dhaka city. But unfortunately now Buriganga is nearly a dead river due severe encroachment, industrial pollution and domestic sewage disposal. The businessmen, local influential persons, political leaders and their relatives have already grasped nearly all the bank of the river. They have established industries, shopping centres, apartments and markets. The government is totally reluctant to enforce the wetland and river protection laws here due to strong relations with the encroachers. To prevent this situation, BAPA started its movement named "Buriganga Bachao Andolon". They arranged several awareness programmes on the issue. BAPA organized boat rally participated by hundreds of boats carrying colourful festoons, banners and placards expressing the demand to demolish the illegal structures from the bank of the river. They also organized seminars, workshops, human chain to aware the people and to create pressure on the law enforcement authority. Media including newspapers and private TV channels also supported the programme by giving huge coverage. At last the government was bound to abolish some of the illegal structures though the action was very inadequate.

Bangladeshi NGOs are also raising their voice against many international developmental programmes which are harmful for wetlands and ecosystem. As for instance one of the respondent NGOs "Ongikar Bangladesh Foundation"

organized “International Tipaimukh dam Conference” on 30-31 December, 2005 in Dhaka. The conference was organized to highlight the negative impact of a dam (construing by neighbouring, country India) on wetland and ecosystem of Bangladesh. Ongikar Bangladesh Foundation claimed that after the conference the government of Bangladesh requested them to submit the supporting documents so that the government can start dialogue with India.

NGOs are also implementing several governmental projects as the partners of the government (Islam, 2002). In Tanguar haor (one of the biggest wetland of Bangladesh and a Ramsar site) a big project on wetland conservation is going on which is funded by USAID. An international NGOs Winrock is implementing the project with its local partner BCAS, CNRS and CARITAS Bangladesh with the assistance of the government. So Bangladeshi NGOs are not only acting as pressure group but also helping the government by providing information and technical supports. Several NGOs like Sunder Jibon, BCAS are doing arsenic related research. They are also arranging seminars and workshops to aware the people about the arsenic problem. Ongikar Bangladesh Foundation took part in marking the arsenic contaminated tube-well in several village for Bangladesh. There are severe lack of transparency and accountability in the government but unfortunately all of the Bangladeshi NGOs are also not free from this allegation (Karim and Osada, 1998 Zarren, 1996). This study found that some NGOs are one man based. Some representatives of surveyed NGOs are also agreed with this. There is a chairman or executive director who is capable but they have no other capable staff. In fact the chairman or executive director never wants to create second man so they appoint their relatives and dependents as staff. They consider NGO as their business organizations (Islam, 2002). Some surveyed NGOs urged to verify how the NGO officials are getting so high salaries, big houses and vehicles. There is another allegation that well funded NGOs are also slightly focusing on there target rather than maintenance though they are receiving more fund.

## CONCLUSION

The research outcomes demonstrate that NGOs are playing active role in the environment

sector of Bangladesh by doing research, advocacy and companying activities. Bangladeshi NGOs have very good relations with international NGOs and donor agencies. Most of the NGOs (research based) are dependent on the foreign aids. But the prominent companying NGOs are not interested to seek governmental and donors supports to uphold their independence and to raise their voice against environmental damage.

The government has passed number of environmental legislations but still the overall environmental condition is deteriorating due to lack of proper implementation activities. MoEF and its daughter organisation DoE are comparatively weak in power in comparison to other ministries. Moreover DoE has no supervision power on the administrative officers like DC (Deputy Commissioner), magistrate and police who are the major law enforcement authorities at field level. The government is also reluctant to involve the stakeholders in the implementing process. More over government officials are not well aware with the international and national environmental legislations. Poverty, high level of population growth and illiteracy of mass people are also deteriorating the overall condition.

The research outcomes also reveal that campaigners are using a combination of dual tactics to drive campaigns. Activities such as article writing in newspapers, organizing of seminars, workshops, conferences, ministerial meetings and provision of scientific information could be easily classifies as “insider” while demonstrations, rally, agitation, symbolic starvation, are clearly “outsider” or confrontational tactics. They are also going to court against government and private organisations to prevent implementation of development projects which are damaging the nature.

Bangladeshi NGOs are not involved with business like other general NGOs in Bangladesh. But there are some NGOs which are basically trying to attract donors and governmental funds just for their own development. The present study also found that some big international NGOs like Winrock, and IUCN are working in Bangladesh by signing memorandum of understanding with the government as a result they are not enrolled themselves with the NGO Affairs Bureau. There are some problems with the governmental

agencies but the national ENGOs may face those problems instead of the international one. So international ENGOs can easily work in Bangladesh and the overall environment is favourable to them. The research based local ENGOs think that they need donor's supports to conduct their researches and to implement projects at field level whereas campaigning ENGOs specially BAPA think that funds of foreign donors and the government restrict the voice of the ENGOs and destroy their independence.

Virtually it is not possible to protect all the wetlands due to huge population pressure in Bangladesh. So, government should identify some important wetlands and which must be protected from human interventions. Wetlands around the big cities must be preserved. Special training programmes need to be arranged for the law enforcing officers so that they can understand the importance to protect environment and biodiversity. The international and national ENGOs may provide such trainings. Stakeholder's involvement in policy making and implementation process is very essential. More over strong commitment of the government to prevent environmental pollution and protect wetlands is very important. It is also necessary to invent rice which needs low amount of water. People should use surface water because surface water is not contaminated with arsenic.

This study also stressed on the necessity of further studies to ascertain the views of policy makers, law enforcing agencies, stakeholders, donor agencies and mass people in relation with the activities of ENGOs in Bangladesh. ENGOs are also implementing some projects like arsenic mitigation programme, wetlands and biodiversity management projects with collaboration of the government and donors. Future studies also needed to explore the utility and sustainability of those projects.

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