D.Net

(Development through Access to Network Resources)

Dhaka, Bangladesh

Annual Report
2002-2003

Introduction:
D.Net is a non-profit organization, which envisages using information and communication technology (ICT) for economic development of Bangladesh.

URL: www.dnet-bangladesh.org

Vision: A knowledge society, which leads Bangladesh towards prosperity.

Mission: To integrate information and communication technology with development process of Bangladesh.

Goals of D.Net
• Knowledge generation and sharing for broader constituency.
• Thriving to play a visible role in ICT and development policy
• Sharing Best practices in South Asia and beyond.

Objectives
• To work for development of the ICT network through out Bangladesh.
• To disseminate knowledge among the poor and SMEs of Bangladesh for using ICT.
• To work for using ICT for improvement of rural livelihood.
• To organize different activities to develop resource pool this can be shared over the Internet and other ICTs.
• To conduct action and policy oriented research on ICT for development mainly in the context of Bangladesh.
• To function as an agency for undertaking and promoting study and to planning for national development and poverty alleviation through use of ICTs.
• To provide information and offer advice on modern research techniques and methodology in economics and other social sciences.

Important Milestones

Time line	Description
January 2001	Inception of D.Net with 18 founder members through a founding meeting
August 2001	Registered under the Societies Act 1860 with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Bangladesh
August 2001	Launching of www.bdresearch.org website, D.Net's first program at CIRDAP auditorium
March 2003	Inauguration of Gunijan program, www.gunijan.org website and Rabindra Tagore song of Prof. Anisur Rahman
June 2003	Study of "Access to Information for Improvement of Rural Livelihood" funded by RIB

March 2004	D.Net Executive Director Dr. Ananya Raihan received Ashoka Fellowship for his creative thinking as regards the access to information for poverty alleviation
March 2004	Computer Literacy Program emerged
April 2004	Registration of D.Net under NGO Affairs Bureau, Reg. No.-1918
June 2004	Developed pre-paid card system for purchasing papers online
June 2004	D.Net become member of One World Network, South Asia
July 2004	Pallitathya Help Line project received grant from GKP, first foreign fund for D.Net
August 2004	D.Net's first publication "Handbook on e-Government and e-Commerce"

Programs of D.Net

D.Net has six core programs

1. Bangladesh Online Research Network (BORN)
2. PALLITATHYA (Sustainable Rural Livelihood Information Network)
3. Bangladesh Online Business Information Network (BOBIN)
4. Gunijan (Building a Proud Heritage)
5. ICT for Human Resource Development (ICT4HRD)
6. Research and Development (R&D)

Program 1:

Program Name: Bangladesh Online Research Network (BORN)

URL: www.bdresearch.org

Program Description: "Bangladesh Online Research Network": The BORN aims at coming up with a warehouse of research information on Bangladesh, which will be available online. The BORN is born to facilitate research for economic development in Bangladesh. The portal is dynamic and uses database at the backend for gathering unlimited quantity of data on research. Research and academic institutions home and abroad are gradually becoming the collaborating partners of the BORN. Research papers are presented both in Bangla and English. Recently BORN has added pre-paid card system (first of its kind in Bangladesh) to sell papers online. Under BORN program D.Net also arranged online broadcasting of National Budget 2003-2004 and the 2004-2005.

Present Status: There are more than 1200 papers (listing, abstract and full paper) available online. Six institutions including Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Unnayan Shamunnay, Bichayan Journal, Khulna University, Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) and Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University

are sharing their resources with BORN. People around the globe are regularly searching resources.

Program 2:

Program Name: PALLITATHYA (Sustainable Rural Livelihood Information Network)

URL: www.pallitathya.org

Program Description: Pallitathya envisions exchange of information for sustainable rural livelihood and contribute to the efforts of poverty alleviation. The philosophy of D.Net is that among other handicaps poor can not improve livelihood due to lack of access to up-to-date livelihood information which include information on agriculture and non-agriculture production, marketing & sales, education, health, culture, environment, human rights, empowerment, employment etc. *This program has been nominated as best ICT product in e-Inclusion division from Bangladesh for World Summit Award (WSA) held in Geneva in December 2003.*

Present Status: Pallitathya program is D.Net's rural development program. Under this program D.Net has launched two projects so far. The projects are-

1. *Study on "Access to Information for Improvement of Rural Livelihood"*
   a. *Description: Researc for Rural Livelihood* Information-needs Identification in five (5) rural villages. Based on the research first Bangla livelihood portal has emerged.

   b. *Sponsor:* Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB)

2. *Action research on "Pallitathya Help Line"*

   a. *Description:* Action research on developing a model on delivering demand based information to rural people through mobile telecom technology. This project is awarded by GKP after a global competition among 500 innovative projects. "Pallitathya Help Line" by D.Net is the only South Asian project that has achieved such success.

   b. *Sponsor:* Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP)

Program 3:

Program Name: Bangladesh Online Business Information Network (BOBIN)

URL: www.bobin.info

Program Description: The BOBIN aims at providing business information to multi-stakeholders home and abroad on a sustainable basis. The BOBIN provides information, interalia for SMEs to get institutional and business development support offered by various organizations. The BOBIN is exploring the scope of full-blown operation all business organizations for win-win collaboration.

Present Status: A static website is on the net with following structure:

BizPolicy	Export , Import, Industry, Privatization, ICT
Stock	Market Analysis , DSE , CSE , Foreign Stock Markets
Directory	HS Code , Trade Bodies , BizOrgs , Communication
BizNews	Country News , International News , BizNet
Toolkit	BOBIN calculator, Loan calculator, Currency converter
Business News	Daily business news highlights
Others	Investment Info , Budget analysis , Online consultant

Program 4:

Program Name: Gunijan (Building a Proud Heritage)

URL: www.gunijan.org

Program Description: As a nation we need sources of inspiration, from are those people who serve our motherland with their creative mind and devotion to ideals of peace, humanity and social justice. The "Gunijan" initiative is for presenting through the internet the best products of our soil, who inspire us through their writings, words, scientific and artistic works and other creative pursuits. We hope that the universally accessible information on our best people will inspire the new generations to show their best as patriots of our motherland.

Present Status: Biography of about 50 eminent personalities is available on the net. The website is bilingual. Under this program we have published a CD with Tagor song of Prof. Anisur Rahman. We are also distributing a CD named "Tanguar Haor" prepared by Dr. Ronald Halder, an amateur wild live video-grapher. Currently a selection board is under formation comprising eminent people, who will finalize the nomination of Gunijons.

Program 5:

Program Name: ICT for Human Resource Development (ICT4HRD):

URL: N/A

Program Description: Under this program D.Net is initiating several projects in order to develop human resources through mainstreaming ICTs in regular economic activities.

Present Status: We have initiated two projects under this program:

1. *Training on "e-Government and e-Commerce"*
   a. *Description:* Under this project D.Net in collaboration with APD has conducted a two-week long training program on e-Government and e-Commerce. The course is designed for government officials. In the very first training 22 participants from the government, with officials ranging from assistant secretary to joint secretary attended.

   c. *Sponsor:* Academy for Planning and Development (APD)

2. *Computer Literacy Program (CLP) for Underprivileged Youth*

   a. *Description:* Under this project D.Net will develop computer center in rural schools in Bangladesh. In the first year we will develop 20 learning centers. A curriculum will also be developed to run training on computing. VAB-NJ, a US based organization will provide 250 PCs per year to run the program with required financial support.

   b. *Sponsor:* Voluntary Association of Bangladesh (VAB) - New Jersey Chapter

Program 6:

Program Name: Research & Development (R&D)

URL: N/A

Program Description: Under this program D.Net conducted several research and consultancy work for development of different sectors. This program served as only earning source for D.Net .

Present Status: As of now D.Net has conducted several research and consultancy works for different stakeholders. They are as follows:

a) **Census on Leather Industry and Allied Products:** This census was conducted for Bangladesh Leather Sector Business Promotion Council (LSBPC) of Ministry of Commerce and sponsored by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in collaboration with Uniconsultant International Ltd.

   • *Research team:* Mr. Shah Md. Ahsan Habib, Md. Jahirul Islam, Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose and Mr. Mahmud Hasan. Dr. Ananya Raihan was the Advisor to this project.

b) **Web based Information Services: A Preparatory Study.** This study was undertaken under the 'FBCCI' Information Center and Data Bank Program. The overall objectives of the study were to identify scope of providing basic business information on its website through creation of inventory and descriptions about useful business relevant websites in Bangladesh.

- *Research team:* Dr. Ananya Raihan, Mr. Mahmud Hasan and Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose

c) **Data Entry for IMED, Planning Commission** - Creation of database under 'Evaluation of 20 selected projects (revised)' of the IMED, GOB.

- *Team leader:* Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose

d) **A desk study on "Status/Strategies of the Leather Sector of the Competing Countries" for Ministry of Commerce and German Technical Cooperation.** This was a complete study on Bangladesh's leather sector including potentials of the sector, information on other competing countries and a comprehensive picture of the leather sector in Bangladesh.

- *Research team:* Dr. Ananya Raihan, Mr. Shah Md. Ahsan Habib and Mr. Jibon K. Roy

e) **MIS development for Ain-O-Salish Kendra:** Under this project D.Net has developed a comprehensive management information system (MIS) for the ASK. This MIS will captures the administration, management and accounting matters, as well as data system for storing cases, history, archive etc. The MIS will enable the ASK to organize whole range of activities.

- *Research team:* Mr. Mustafizur Rahman

f) **Study of "Making National Policies Working for Creating Female Employment":** This study was prepared for OXFAM Bangladesh livelihood program. The study mainly focuses on relevance of national policies to employment especially female employment, alternative sources of female employment (both production and service sector) and the possible impact on National Economy.

- *Research team:* Md. Jahirul Islam, Mr. Mahmud Hasan and Dr. Ananya Raihan

g) **PKSF Credit Bureau Database:** Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) is developing a Credit Bureau Database to operate its function more smoothly and fruitfully nationwide. Datasoft Systems Bangladesh Limited has been selected to develop the software. To develop the software a thorough system study was required and D.Net was involved in survey part. The major activities of the project were to conduct survey of 35 MFIs, prepare draft report, organize

"Technical Workshop" in collaboration with Datasoft and finally prepare a final report with system requirement for developing such data bank.

- ***Research team:*** Dr. Ananya Raihan, Mr. Ajoy Kuamr Bose, Mr. Mustafizur Rahman

h) **Collaboration with BGMEA for upgrading** www.bangladeshgarments.info **:** For the first time in the country, Bangladesh Garments Manufacturer and Exporter Association (BGMEA) has launched its portal in Dhaka on July 2, 2002. The Web portal opened a unique opportunity for e-commerce between the BGMEA members and the buyers worldwide. The Web portal provides the Garment Manufacturers to project their full profile of production strength and range of products, while the buyers will be able to place on line order without taking hassle of physical visits to the factories. Regularly updated site will keep pace with its competitors outside the country. The portal designed & developed by DataSoft System Bangladesh Ltd. & eVastra, U.S.A, would play a significant role in promoting the Bangladesh's Ready Made Garments (RMGs) in the world market. Under that agreement D.Net updated the portal by collecting information from relevant RMG factories. In the First Phase 450 (Four hundred fifty) RMGs information were updated by D.Net.

- ***Team lead by :*** Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose

i) **Market Feasibility Study of the Diagnostic Clinic Management System:** D.Net in collaboration with Datasoft Bangladesh Limited conducted a feasibility study of the Diagnostic Clinic Management System in Bangladesh.. The main objective of the study is to produce a market feasibility study of a software on the Diagnostic Clinic Management System produced by Datasoft Systems Ltd. The study includes assessing the nature and extent of ICT usage by diagnostic center, hospitals and clinics and the status of ICT products and services in the health sector.
- ***Research team:*** Mr. Mahmud Hasan, Mr. Mridul Chowdhury and Mr. Taifur Rahman and Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose

Institutional Collaboration:

D.Net has developed institutional linkages with various types of likeminded organization. These organizations ranged from government to non-government, national-international-local. The list of institutions that have been collaborated with are-

International Organizations

- Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP)
- One World Network
- Volunteer Association for Bangladesh (VAB)
- IDRC

National Organizations

- Ain-O-Salish Kendra
- Academy for Planning and Development (APD)
- Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI)
- Bangladesh Garments Manufacturing and Exporters Association (BGMEA)
- Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM)
- Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
- Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI)
- Health21
- IMED-Ministry of Planning
- Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)
- Khulna University
- Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB)
- Unnayan Shamunnay
- STEDI (Sustainable Tele-doctor Initiative),
- TechBangla

Local Organization

- Gono Unnayan Foundation, Nilphamari
- Advanced Program for Rootless People (APRP), Magura