

D.Net

(Development through Access to Network Resources)

Dhaka, Bangladesh

Annual Report 2002

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Introduction

On January 3, 2001 D.Net (Development through Access to Network Resources), non-profit organization was formed through a foundation meeting with a vision to use information and communication technology (ICT) for economic development of Bangladesh. Since that meeting D.Net formally started its activities for forming the organization and exploring its programs. D.Net undertook the following programs to be implemented gradually:

1. BORN (Bangladesh Online Research Network) called www.bdresearch.org
2. BOBIN (Bangladesh Online Business Information Network) called www.bobin.info
3. PollyTathya (Rural Information Center) at www.pallitathya.org
4. Gunijan at www.gunijan.org
5. BVU (Bangladesh Virtual University)
6. ICT Development Program

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 of D.Net

D.Net promotes development through use of Information and Communication technology [thereafter ICT] through out the country. D•Net is a multi disciplinary organization, which promotes all sorts of activities to use ICT for economic development of Bangladesh and broadly of the least developing countries.

- 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 participate actively.
- To work for using ICT for agriculture, health, education, legal right, awareness building and capacity building for development.
- To organize different activities to develop resource pool which 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 research and dissemination of knowledge in development economics and other sciences related to national planning 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.

D.Net Management

D.Net is governed and managed by a number of bodies and committees as spelled out in its constitution. It has apex bodies viz. governing body and executive committee.

Governing body

The affairs of the Organization are managed by a Governing Body, which has the responsibility to determine the direction and scope at the activities of the Organization. The Governing Body exercises full management and financial control of the Organization.

The Governing Body generally pursues and carries out the objectives of the organisation and is responsible for the management and administration of the affairs of the Organization

D.Net consist twelve members Governing Body includes Chairman, two Vice Chairmen, General Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and six Member.

The members of the Governing Body is selected from the general body, which is consists of Founder members mentioned in the Memorandum of Association of the Organization. The members (except the Chairman and General Secretary/Executive Director) of the Governing Body retire every two years before the Annual General Meeting and thereafter new members of the Governing Body in place of those retiring are elected by the General Body in the Annual General Meeting. All retiring members of the Governing Body shall be eligible for re-election.

The Governing Body has power to co-opt one or more additional members of the Governing Body base on stipulated rules.

Scholars and eminent personalities from home and abroad are involved in D.Net initiatives. It has formed with a Governing Body consisting of 12 members headed by a Chairman.

Executive Committee

Every two years the Governing Body elects an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee runs day to day activities of the organization. The Executive Committee is accountable to the Governing Body. The Executive Committee includes Executive Chairman, Executive Director, and Members.

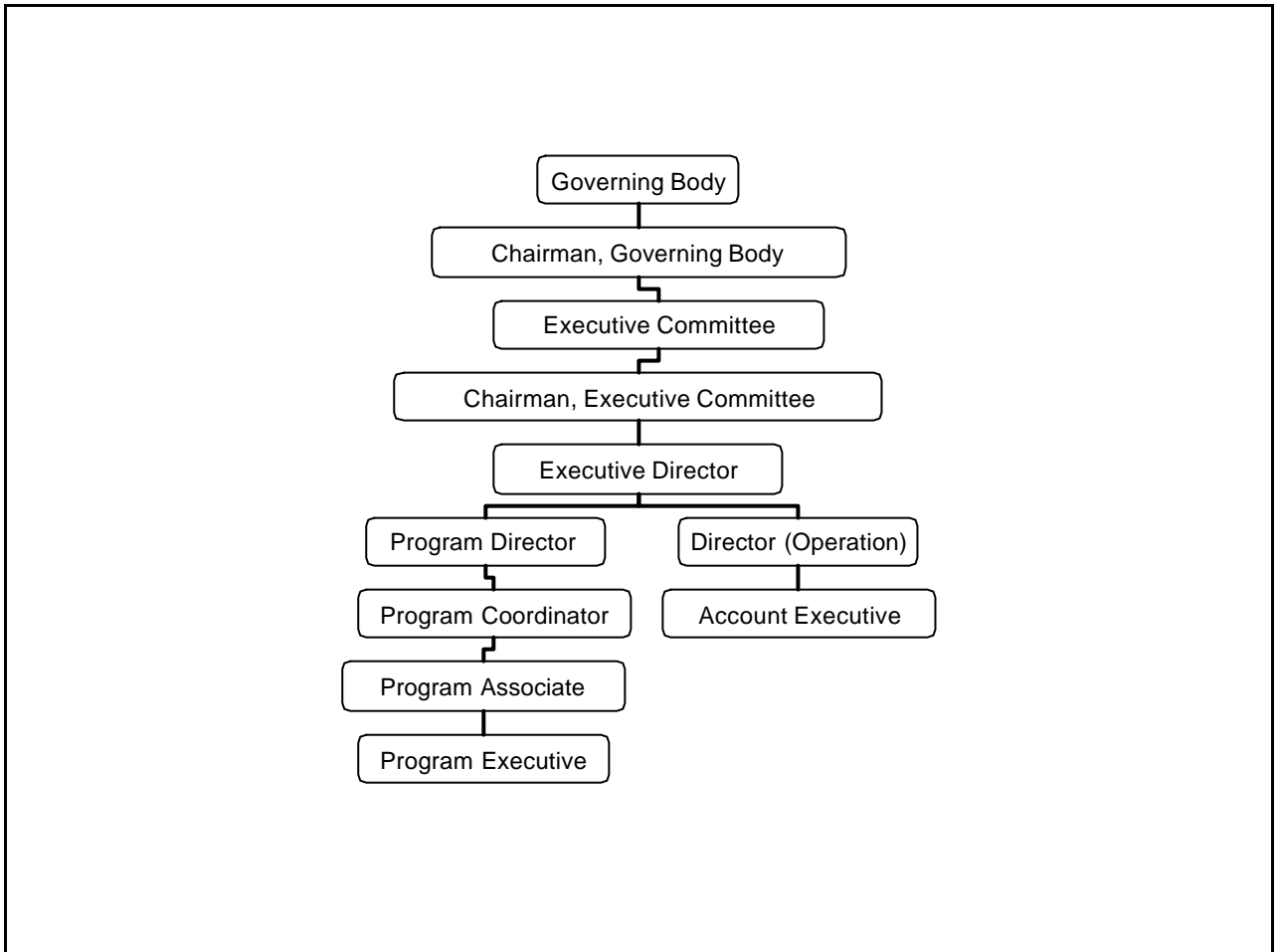
Governing Body	Executive Committee
Chairman: Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya Vice-Chairman : Dr. Toufic Ahmad Choudhury General Secretary : Dr. Ananya Raihan Joint Secretary : Mr. Jahirul Islam Treasure : Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose Members: Mr. Anir Chowdhury Mr. M. Azmat Khan Mr. Dipak Kamal Mr. Mahmud Hasan Mr. Mridul Chowdhury Mr. M. Shahadat Hossain	Executive Chairman : Dr. Toufic Ahmad Choudhury, Executive Director : Dr. Ananya Raihan Joint Executive Director : Mr. Jahirul Islam Members: Mr. Ajoy Kumar Bose Mr. M Azmat Khan Dr. Shahnaj Karim Mr. Mahmud Hasan

Legal Status

D.Net has registered under “Register of Joint Stock Companies, Bangladesh of Societies Act 1860” dated August 8, 2001. Its registration number is *S-2601(14)/2001*.

Organogram of D.Net

The Organogram of D.Net is given below



Program Status

1. Bangladesh Online Research Network (BORN)

Among all the programs of D.Net, BORN is the first 'born child'. The Internet has brought about revolutionary opportunities in the way today's research is conducted, disseminated and used in spheres of business, academia and the government. The whole world of information is now virtually a few "clicks" away. The research scenario in Bangladesh, however, has hardly benefited from these opportunities despite the immense scope for improvement. In a study performed by D.Net (Development through Access to Network Resources) it was found that in a typical research conducted in Bangladesh up to 40% of total costs is spent on information search and collection.

Apart from the cost and availability of the Internet, there is another important factor which discourages the use of Internet for research in Bangladesh - the lack of easy accessibility to required information. Online information is scattered all over the World Wide Web and it is often not possible to *quickly* know about the existence and availability of a particular piece of information.

BORN is envisaged to facilitate fill this gap between the source of information and the point of its need. In an environment where Internet usage fees are gradually decreasing, it will serve as a categorized and regularly-updating online directory through which relevant information can be *quickly* tracked and downloaded.

In short, BORN is about efficiently *learning*, *teaching* and, above all, *sharing* acquired or created knowledge through the convenience of a single web-site - to facilitate research, policy-making, business-planning or report-writing in the context of Bangladesh.

Vision of BORN

To facilitate research for economic and social development in Bangladesh and thus build e-Bangladesh through access to Networked Resources

Mission

To enhance use of Networked Resources in economic and business research and other areas on Bangladesh through an "online resource pool" specifically dedicated for Bangladesh

Aims and Objectives

- To facilitate research on Bangladesh by business, academia, government, NGOs, development agencies and the media through online research content
- To provide categorized and updated research material on Bangladesh from around the globe
- To provide information on library based resources within Bangladesh
- To make important paper-based data and publications available online
- To look for user requested information promptly and effectively
- To provide information about upcoming publications and events relevant to Bangladesh
- To serve as a platform for information-givers and information-seekers to interact
- To serve as a platform for resident and non-resident Bangladeshi academicians and businessmen with similar interest to interact and cooperate online

Rationale for BORN

In a survey conducted by D.Net the following difficulties faced by the researchers were identified:

- ◆ Information on availability of resources
- ◆ Information on location of availability of resources
- ◆ Access to information and resources
- ◆ Time for getting resources
- ◆ Cost of resources
- ◆ Payment for the access to the resources
- ◆ Update of information
- ◆ Quality of information
- ◆ Lack of common interface for information

Information on availability of resources

The research outputs are scattered geographically and often it is not possible to know about the existence of the institutions conducting research and the type of research conducted there and output the research activities. A researcher spends much of time and financial resources to get information about the availability of required research output. BORN is to serve the need for information on research output availability. Along with the publication lists of the research institutions the BORN will collect the research output on mutually beneficial terms taking into consideration the intellectual property aspects and host or link it to the portal. The list of published resources in local libraries are also planned to insert in the database of BORN which facilitate the users to get the reference list of required field of studies sitting at home.

Information on location of availability of resources

The listing of archived resources in different libraries and web sites will be available along with the insert, which will inform the users about the availability of a particular resource with the location. This facility will help the researchers to *avoid trial and error* method in search of research information.

Access to information and resources

While availability of information regarding the location of a particular resource reduces the wastage of time and cost of searching, the availability of the resource itself on the web will be a great deal for the researcher. BORN is envisaged to collect the resources and make them available on the web depending on the scope to do so. This facility will *make the research information a few clicks way* in real sense.

Time and Cost for getting resources

The process of collection of information regarding the availability of resources and collection of resources becomes very costly and often impossible due to the geographical distance and lack of cost-effectiveness. For example, a researcher living in Rajshahi has to come Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dhaka for searching required resources, which may not be available there. Even, if s/he gets the desired resources the total time spent for that endeavor is minimum 48 hours. Now, if the researcher knows about the BORN and can get access to it, s/he can get the list of references as well as some selective papers, which takes maximum 15 minutes time. The example can be exaggerated further by taking different locations within country and around the globe. BORN reduces the time for searching the resources and help the researchers to get more

times for analytical purposes. For a country like Bangladesh, cost of research is a major concern. BORN can be of great benefit for the research community here. The business research group uses the information and minimize the time for decision making, which ultimately help in maximizing the objectives of sustainability.

Common interface for information

BORN is designed to grow into a national gateway for the research information. The common interface of www.bdresearch.org is a unique resource pool for researchers, teachers, policy makers, students, donors, NGO activists, journalists, business community, doctors and engineers, legal professionals and other professional groups. The resources are available on www.bdresearch.org or linked to it.

Access to BORN helps

- **businessmen** access business data quickly and efficiently
- **investors** - foreign and local - easily know about various government incentive programs for investments
- **teachers and students** all over the world, including remote areas with limited library facilities, access information about Bangladesh quickly and efficiently
- **researchers** find existing literature on Bangladesh quickly and also make their own publications easily accessible to others
- **academicians** interact and cooperate with others of similar interest without geographical barriers
- **policy-makers** get quick access to updated information on Bangladesh for policy formulation
- **governmental organizations** disseminate information about government policies, strategies and business incentives
- **NGOs and development agencies** access and also share information about development strategies and respective experiences
- **journalists and reporters** get quick access to relevant information for prompt and up-to-date report-writing

Web development

The portal www.bdresearch.org (see annex-3) was registered with www.register.com USA and functions in a limited scale on experimental basis since August, 2001. Developed in *SQL server* and *Cold fusion* the portal has a very user-friendly layout. The layout is regularly updated also time to time with the development of web technology. After preparing the web, hosting was the major challenge in front of us. At the same time we were running shortage of money. Two of our partner organization showed up with their cooperation, which help us to host our web sites. For D.Net, www.ebdesh.com and for BORN, www.techbangla.org gave web space accordingly. At present both the sites are hosted at www.ebdesh.com web site.

Papers availability on the web:

An user can get into the reference list through theme or type of publication sub-link. Currently the resources on the following themes are available from a limited number of sources:

- Anthropology
- Bio-medical Technology
- Chemical Technology
- Development Studies
- Economics
- Education
- Energy and Power
- Engineering
- Entrepreneurship
- Environment
- Finance & Banking
- Fine Arts
- Health
- History

- Information and Communication Technology
 - International Relations
- Literature
 - Natural Resource
 - Natural Science
 - Nuclear Energy
- Politics and Strategic Issues
 - Social Studies
 - Telecommunications
 - Women's Studies

New themes will be added and new resources from new sources will enrich the portal for users' satisfaction.

When a user wants to search by type of publication, s/he can search by the following types of publications or by all of them at a time:

Book	Conference Paper	Dialogue Report
Discussion Paper	Issue Paper	Journal Article
News Paper Article	Occasional Paper	Research Paper
Seminar Paper	Working Paper	All

Outcome of BORN initiative:

Present papers status

A lot of papers on different topics have been hosted in BORN web site. As of now total 493 papers on 52 categories are available on the web site. In the portal an user will be able to download useful software for increasing efficiency in browsing like *getright*, *acrobat reader*, *bangla font* for viewing bangla papers etc. Through online poll, user will be able to participate in forming public opinion regarding important socio-economic and political issues. The components of the portal will be updated on the basis of research and users' feedback.

Paper status at BORN web site:

S.N.	Type of Publication	Paper & Abstract	Only Paper	Only Abstract	Listing	Linking
1	Agriculture	14	-	-	-	-
2	Agro-based Industry	1	-	-	-	-
3	Anthropology	-	1	-	1	5
4	Bio-technology	1	-	-	-	-
5	Corruption	2	3	-	-	-
6	Democracy	1	-	-	-	-
7	Development Studies	15	53	20	21	56
8	E-Commerce	2	15	-	-	-
9	Education	2	1	-	-	-
10	Energy & Power	4	7	1	3	-
11	Engineering	1	-	-	-	-
12	Entrepreneurship	1	4	-	1	3
13	Environment	7	1	-	-	-
14	Ergonomics	1	-	-	-	-
15	Ethics	-	2	-	-	-
16	Finance & Banking	6	15	-	2	-
18	Fine Arts	1	-	-	-	-
19	Globalization	2	-	-	-	-
20	Health	-	4	1	-	-
21	History	-	-	-	-	3
22	Human Development	1	-	1	1	-
23	Human Resource	1	-	-	3	-

24	Human Rights	3	2	1	1	1
25	Industry	1	-	-	-	-
26	Information & Communication Technology	11	5	-	-	-
27	International Relations & Strategic Issues	3	7	-	4	1
28	Investment	2	-	-	-	-
29	Journalism	-	1	-	-	-
3-	Land Administration	3	-	-	-	-
31	Law	-	1	-	-	-
32	Literature	1	-	-	-	4
33	Macroeconomics	3	10	6	5	8
34	Management	3	-	-	-	-
35	Micro Credit	-	-	-	1	-
36	Migration	2	-	-	-	-
37	Natural Resources	1	3	-	-	1
38	Natural Science	10	-	-	-	1
39	Pharmacology	2	-	-	-	-
4-	Philosophy	3	1	-	-	-
41	Policy & Reform	1	3	-	1	2
42	Political Economy	1	-	-	-	-
43	Political Issues	-	2	-	1	31
44	Political Science	-	3	-	-	-
45	Population	1	-	-	-	-
46	Poverty Alleviation	2	-	-	-	-
47	Religion	1	-	-	-	1
48	Sociology	-	1	-	-	-
49	Technology	22	3	-	1	2
5-	Telecommunication	1	6	-	-	-
51	Transport	-	1	-	-	-
52	Urbanization	3	-	-	-	-
Subtotal:		143	155	30	46	119
Total :					493	

Hit count of BORN web site

Since August, 2002 the site has generated huge interest among the researchers home and abroad. The total number of hits till December 31, 2002 was more than 5423. The planned expansion of the BORN now requires financial support until it will become self-sustainable.

Promotion of BORN

- ***Inauguration ceremony:*** On August 16, 2001 D.Net formally launch its BORN. The inaugural ceremony was held at CIRDAP auditorium. Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University was the chief guest on the occasion. Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud honoured the special guest. The ceremony was presided over by Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, chairman of D.Net. Dr. Taufic Ahmad Chowdhury, executive chairman of D.Net was designated speaker on the occasion. Mr Jahirul Islam, Joint Executive Director of D.Net presented BORN web site.
- ***Workshop on "Knowledge Management, Global Perspective and BDRResearch":*** D.Net in co-operation with TechBangla have jointly organized a workshop on "Knowledge Management, Global Perspective and BDRResearch" on 4th April at 4:00 PM at TechBangla office. Two main presentator was Dr. Syed Akhter Mahmud, Senior Economist, World Bank,

Washington and Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, Executive Director, CPD. Mr. Anir Chowdhury had moderated the program. For details please see the annex.

- **Preparation of Promotional Documents for BORN:** D.Net has developed promotional materials for BORN project. The material includes brochure, poster and special pad to run its campaign properly and effectively.

Membership status

There are three (3) types of membership i.e.; 1) Individual membership, 2) Institutional membership and 3) Sponsor membership.

- 1) **Institutional membership status:** As of now, four- (4) institutions has become the "Institution Member" of BORN project. They are Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bichayan, Samunnay, Khulna University. All these institutions are hosting their papers in BORN web site regularly.
- 2) **Sponsors:** D.Net also invites different organizations to become the sponsor of its BORN project for its sustainability. Up to now Technoheaven, EBdesh and DataSoft Systems Limited become the only sponsor. We have a vast target of incorporating more sponsors for BORN.

2. Bangladesh Online Business Information Network (BOBIN)

After starting the BORN program D.Net has initiated its second project Bangladesh Online Business Information Network (BOBIN). The primary documentation of the project is going on. A group of dedicated volunteer team under supervision of D.Net executive director successfully running their jobs.

Web development

BOBIN has developed its web portal named www.bobin.info and hosted the portal in collaboration with www.bdonline.com and www.ebdesh.com.

Primary documentation for updating the portal and information collection from secondary sources is going on.

3. PollyTathya (Rural Information Center)

Access to information has been neglected as an individual issue in the paradigm of access to resources, which is essential for poverty alleviation. ICTs brought new opportunities to accelerate the efforts of poverty alleviation through integration of ICT with the access to information problems. There are many approaches around to link ICTs [especially the Internet] with poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement. Majority of the approaches suffers from the problem of mechanical combination of ICT and problems at the grass-root level. The problems of the current approaches and programs are: they focus only on the Internet ignoring the strengths of other existing and new channels of information delivery, they ignore that the access to Internet for alien content cannot help the rural livelihood concerns, and they ignore lack of overt resources by the target group. Majority of the efforts lack sustainability and viability and can not function without sustained financial and technical support. One fundamental weakness of the existing ICT models is that they perceive rural people to be only the information receivers, not suppliers.

Taking into cognizance the current efforts and their limitations, D.Net has developed a system of actions, which has been conceived into a set of testable of hypotheses. The prime hypothesis is

that ICT can be meaningfully integrated for addressing access to information problem through a viable information delivery model run by the poor.

Full Cycle of Sustainable Access to Information for Rural Livelihood

Phase I. Understanding and Identification of Information Needs and Effective Delivery Channels for the Rural Livelihood

- A. Understanding information needs of the rural community in Bangladesh
- B. Understanding information supply by existing institutions
- C. Assessment of Current Information Delivery Channels for their effectiveness and identification of gap
- D. Development of taxonomy of Contents
- E. Identification of Contents through Experimentation for their Suitability developed along with partner organizations
- F. Development of contents for testing the effectiveness of the channels
- G. Identification of Rural Livelihood Information from Supply Perspective

Phase II. Experimenting Business Model for Sustainability through Establishment of Palli-Tathya Kendra (Information Center)

- A. Development of Alternative Business Models with “Information Intermediary Concept” for Improving Access to Information for Rural Livelihood.
- B. Village level Set up
- C. Development of Customized Information with Sustainable Channel of Delivery
- D. Development of a Set of Economic Activities for Financial Sustainability
- E. Development of Replicable Model of Information Intermediary for Rural Livelihood in Developing Countries

Phase III. Continuation of Content Development Activities

Phase IV. Study on Impact Analysis of the Palli Tathya Kendra (Information Center)

Activities taken so far

The idea of starting this program has initiated this year. After consulting the issues with several stakeholders the project framework has developed this year.

Preparation of Project Proposal for PollyTathya

D.Net has already prepared project proposal for *PollyTathya* project. The full project proposal has been submitted to Research Initiatives of Bangladesh (RIB) for initial research and operation of a pilot project for about one year.

4. Other Programs

A. Market Feasibility study of the Diagnostic Clinic Management System

D.Net in collaboration with Datasoft Bangladesh Limited has conducted a feasibility study of the Diagnostic Clinic Management System in Bangladesh. The project was funded by Datasoft Systems Bangladesh Limited and D.Net itself.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to produce a market feasibility study of the Diagnostic Clinic Management System produced by Datasoft Systems Ltd. Other specific objectives are:

1. Assess the nature and extent of ICT usage by diagnostic center, hospitals and clinics.
2. Assess the status of ICT products and services in the health sector

The findings of the research output will be used in marketing a software prepared by Datasoft Bangladesh Limited.

B. 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. The Web portal has opened a unique opportunity for e-commerce between the BGMEA members and the buyers worldwide. The Web portal will provide 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, it would play a significant role in promoting the Bangladesh's Ready Made Garments (RMGs) in the world market.

D.Net will update the portal on the subject for the Officers of RMGs units & this would ensure proper use and operation of the system by them. D.Net will update the web site with the information of BGMEA members initially. In the First Phase 450 (Four hundred fifty) RMGs information will be updated by D.Net. According to the contract, D.Net will update at least 150 (One hundred fifty) RMGs information in the portal per month. However, the quantity may be changed due to unavoidable circumstances.

C. PKSF Credit Bureau Database

Polli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) is going to develop a Credit Bureau Database to operate its function more smoothly and fruitfully nationwide. Datasoft Bangladesh Limited has been selected to develop the software. To develop the software a thorough study is required and D.Net has involved in survey part. The major activities of the project will be

1. Pre-test of the questionnaire in some selected MFIs before survey.
2. Finalize the questionnaire in consultation with the consultant and DataSoft.
3. Conduct survey at least 35 MFIs selected by PKSF.
4. Prepare a draft report according to the prescribed format.
5. Organize a "Technical Workshop" in collaboration with DataSoft to generate inputs from MFI & PKSF representatives and other micro credit specialists.
6. Revise the report with consultation with consultant and DataSoft.
7. Prepare the final report.

Annex
Workshop on "Knowledge Management, Global Perspective and BDRResearch"

D.Net in co-operation with TechBangla have jointly organized a workshop on "Knowledge Management, Global Perspective and BDRResearch" on 4th April at 4:00 PM at TechBangla office. Two main presentaters were Dr. Syed Akhter Mahmud, Senior Economist, World Bank, Washington and Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, Executive Director, CPD. Mr. Anir Chowdhury had moderated the program.

At the introductory speech, Dr. Seikh Mizan, Coordinator, TechBangla has welcomed everybody to participate in such an exciting event, which may fill the gap of information lack in Bangladesh and create a breakthrough in Bangladesh's development.

Dr. Ananya Raihan, Executive Director, D.Net, said that it takes a lot of effort to find out the sources where we can get access to our resources.

Senior Economist of the World Bank Dr. Mahmud has said that we do not know what our neighbours know. So, the gap of knowledge sharing starts from here. He also mentioned that, retirement people getting a lot of experience in different field could not contribute their experiences for the next generation. Their experiences become limited only to their friends and relatives, which is completely unproductive in a sense. If we could document all these experiences then it could be probably the best resources that we have ever before.

In his speech Dr. Mahmud has said that World Bank has started this type of program on Knowledge Management. But their performance is not up to the mark because of some constraints. He has pointed three (3) steps of knowledge management accordingly. The steps are:-

- a) Collection of knowledge,
- b) Organize them and
- c) Disseminate them.

There can be two ways for collection of knowledge, (1) Explicit and (2) Implicit. Explicit process means documentation in a very formal way and Implicit is that which are not documented. But in LDCs perspective implicit knowledge gathering is more important. As 80% to 90% of our knowledge is not explored, our documentation process is not that much systematic. So, implicit knowledge management is essential here. Implicit knowledge management can be either centralized or decentralized and even mixer of this. No matter what it is centralized or decentralized, we have to develop community practice on thematic issues. What we need is to identify the community based on themes. This practice will help us to find out the fields where we are lacking behind and also native experts. Then a help desk can be opened in search of experts on that fields. Here in this point Non Resident Bangladeshi can contribute. So, knowledge sharing can help us to make best use of our experts. Collaboration can be built among Bangladeshi experts all around the world.

Answering to a question regarding Development Gateway, Dr. Mahmud said that Global Gateway is for the development stakeholder information sharing. Already a lot of countries have started collaboration with Global Gateway including India and Pakistan. In Bangladesh, BIDS, CPD, D.Net, or all of them, jointly can collaborate with Global Gateway. In fact, some specific criterion exists for joining this gateway. The respective representatives required at least one from Government sector, one from private sector and one from parent organization.

D.Net chairman and Executive Director of Center for Policy Dialogue Dr. Debapriya has said that three (3) years ago he had a discussion with Dr. Mahmud regarding knowledge management. That dreams turn to reality through D.Net's initiative. He said that most important think of knowledge management is right to access. Information sharing is knowledge sharing. So, where information ends knowledge starts, said Dr. Bhattacharya. It is very important to distinguish where knowledge ends and information starts and vice versa. He said that it is not essential that everybody need to know everything. But what is essential is that people need to know where they can get information. So, access to information is more important than acquiring knowledge. To create right access to information proper documentation and dissemination is must. Supporting Dr. Mahmud's speech Dr. Bhattacharya said that implicit knowledge sharing is more important especially in LDCs. According to him, there are two constraints in LDCs as

- (1) Patient right and
- (2) Digital divide.

Dr. Bhattacharya said that, as 10% of our population have access to television, 5% have access to telephone, 1% have access to computer, so less than 1% have access to Internet. So, without removing this digital divide we cannot ensure proper dissemination of knowledge. D.Net can overcome both the constraints.

CPD's Executive Director has said that now CPD is working in focusing on implicit knowledge management through Dialogue. Usually CPD invites government representatives and other potential citizen to attend their dialogue and hold discussion on different policy level issues: their merits and demerits. And finally they have to pursue government representatives to solve the existing problems. But it should be demand oriented. What would be real if government officials ask CPD to hold a discussion on topics selected by them and they would be eager to know current realities. Based on the discussion government would change the policies where necessary. This trend should change. Now, time has arrived to change the mindset of traditional government officials. Even people do not know a lot of government information though they have access to know that. We need to develop Freedom of Information Act. Dr. Bhattacharya said that I personally believe that this BDRResearch portal can do that.

Dr. Bhattacharya focussed on cost structure of such initiatives. He said that creation demand is very important for the sustainability of the portal. In Bangladesh appreciation of information and ability to improve circumstances has a moral hazard. People do not really like to pay even if he may need the matter urgently. There is a market failure here. So, strong mobilization is needed to create demand. Off course, supply can create its own demand. But it takes time to overcome this problem. The same circumstances will occur in case of BDRResearch. Here also the supply has increased lot but demand is not increased that much. BDRResearch have to focus on this, said Dr. Bhattacharya. Sometime they have to create pressure to the target group. I do not want them to be Tehelka.com. But some aggressive steps must be taken and that will be for the good fate of the nation.

After the discussion Dr. Ananya Raihan has demonstrated the idea of Bangladesh Online Research Network (BORN) and presented BORN's contribution in knowledge management.