

# **DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION**

**AT THE DAWN OF THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**

**BANGLADESH-GERMAN PARTNERSHIP IN PERSPECTIVE**

Edited by

**A.K.M. ABDUS SABUR**

The book ***Development Co-operation at the Dawn of the Twenty First Century:*** ***Bangladesh-German***

***Partnership in Perspective*** deals with the problems of and prospects for development co-operation in the age of globalisation with particular reference to Bangladesh-German partnership. A host of Bangladeshi and German authors, from a variety of academic disciplines, professional background and socio-political orientation, analyse development co-operation and related issues, like development policy, development assistance, trade and investment, education and training, poverty alleviation, human rights, NGOs and others. The book represents a critical account of achievements and pitfalls of development co-operation, particularly that between Bangladesh and Germany. A host of innovative ideas and approaches contained in the book may be of significant importance to the scholars, policy makers and practitioners.

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## FOREWORD

In the age of Globalisation, global challenges can only be met by co-operative partnership. In the pursuit of such partnership Germany continues to feature very prominently in our planning matrix and Bangladesh continues to be a major partner of Germany in development co-operation of the Asian Region.

Bangladesh is the third largest recipient of aid from FRG in the form of financial assistance for infrastructure development, technical co-operation for vocational training, promotion of basic health services, rural development and poverty alleviation. Future areas of co-operation are indeed very extensive which, in particular, include the health and population sectors, flood control and cyclone protection, improvement in the transport sector including the modernisation of the railways. In Trade and Commerce Bangladesh enjoys trade surplus with the FRG. Therefore, development co-operation between Bangladesh and Germany and related issues are of academic as well as practical interest.

It is in this backdrop that the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and the German Embassy in Dhaka organised a Round Table on: **Development Policy on the Threshold of the Year 2000** during October 6-7, 1999. The main purpose of the Round Table was to take a fresh look at the development policy of Bangladesh's development partners, with special reference to German co-operation for the development of Bangladesh. The Round Table was designed to:

- Exchange information, views and outlook concerning development policy in general terms, and German development policy in Bangladesh, in particular; and
- Promote constructive political dialogue on the subject involving a wide variety of actors, such as, German and Bangladeshi participants and different political parties and interest groups in Bangladesh.

A wide range of participants including Honourable Members of the Cabinet, Members of the Parliaments, representatives from academia, media, foreign missions and donor agencies in Dhaka, policymakers and concerned professionals took part in the deliberations. In addition, six participants from Germany representing academia, media and development agencies travelled a long way to Bangladesh and made valuable contribution to the deliberations in the Round Table.

It is the profound success of the Round Table in terms of generating interest among academia, media, and professional and policymaking circles that has encouraged the BIISS and the German Embassy in Dhaka to see its proceedings published. I am very glad that the BIISS has decided to publish the proceedings of the Round Table in a book form entitled: **Development Co-operation at the Dawn of the Twenty First Century: Bangladesh-German Partnership in Perspective**. I hope that the book would receive considerable attention on the part of concerned professionals, including the policymakers.

I would like to record my thanks to Major General Mustafa Kamaluddin ndu, psc, Chairman, BIISS, for his guidance and Brigadier Muhammad Shahedul Anam Khan (Retd.), former Director General, BIISS for undertaking the initiative and organising the Round Table. I also express my sincere gratitude to H. E. Mr. Uwe Schramm, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Bangladesh and his staff for their generous support in organising the Round Table and publishing the book. Last, but not the least, I also thank Mr. A. K. M. Abdus Sabur, Senior Research Fellow, BIISS for co-ordinating the Round Table and editing its proceedings in a book form.

Dated : Dhaka  
October 10, 2000

Major General Jamil D. Ahsan, Bir Protik, psc  
Director General, BIISS



## FOREWORD

The present state and even more so the future of development policy is a subject which is of paramount importance to Bangladesh. At the same time, development co-operation is the cornerstone of German-Bangladesh relations. This has served as an impetus for the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and the German Embassy in Dhaka to jointly organise a Round Table on: **Development Policy on the Threshold of the Year 2000** at the BISS Auditorium during October 6-7, 1999. While the experiences of development partnership between Bangladesh and Germany form the natural starting point of our deliberations, we consciously did not restrict ourselves to German-Bangladesh co-operation. This has been reflected in our selection of the title of the Round Table. This is to indicate that we are eager to learn from others and that we are most willing to share our own experiences.

We also want to look towards the year 2000 and beyond. There is no dearth of studies dealing with development policy as it stands and as it is. We want to know more. We shall ask ourselves what is new in conceptual thinking and where development policy is going in the years ahead.

We see and we want to continue seeing development co-operation as a partnership relation, not as a relationship between big and small or strong and weak, and certainly not between high up and down yonder. If not for anything else, this is a matter of political common sense. German development policy will continue to be based on a partnership approach, on the basis of shared values and objectives.

Finally, we expect development policy in the coming years to become far more political in nature than it used to be in the past. One of the reasons is that international relations are increasingly being marred by armed conflicts, the vast majority of them – indeed more than 100 armed conflicts during the Nineties alone – non-statal in nature. Many if not most of the conflicts are taking place at sub-national levels and involve at present around 175 armed groups and organisations.



Against this backdrop, development policy will have to play a far greater role than ever for the maintenance of international peace and stability, by means of reducing the structural origins of violent conflicts such as abject poverty, ecological disasters and serious misgovernance, and also by means of introducing mechanisms for the non-violent solution of conflicts, such as the promotion of democratic decision making, an efficient and influential civil society, a fair and non-biased judicial system and last not least by responsibly trained and controlled security forces. It is my expectation – and let me say also my hope – that we will see such new priorities emerge in development co-operation in the not too distant future.

The Round Table has dealt with these and related issues. It has also met with keen interest and attention on the part of distinguished personalities from Bangladesh Government and the Opposition in the Parliament, senior officials, members of the Diplomatic Corps, scholars, experts, journalists and concerned professionals. Six German experts came over here, at a distance of more than 7,000 kilometres, to enrich our debates through their professional knowledge and experience. Let me express my sincere gratitude to all of them for their contribution to the success of the Round Table.

It is the profound interest generated by the deliberations in the Round Table among academia, media, and professional and policymaking circles that has encouraged the BISS and the German Embassy in Dhaka to see its proceedings published. I am very glad that BISS has decided to publish the proceedings of the Round Table in a book form entitled: ***Development Co-operation at the Dawn of the Twenty First Century: Bangladesh-German Partnership in Perspective***. I hope that the book will be a significant addition to the scholarly discourse on the issues that it dealt with. Let me express my thanks and deep appreciation to BISS, its senior management and staff as well as the Editor of the book for their initiative.

Dated: Dhaka  
October 10, 2000

Uwe Schramm  
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Dhaka, Bangladesh