

In order to provide legal aid to the poor litigants, Legal Aid Services Act 2000 (LASA) was promulgated by the government of Bangladesh. Thereafter, National Legal Aid Services Organization (NLASO) was established in the country for the first time in 2001. The year 2009 was very significant for NLASO as the organization set up its own office and I became the first full time Director of the same which is mandated to provide legal aid to the poor, needy and the distressed. Our target is to reach out to the people across 64 districts in the country through the District Legal Aid Committees. In 2013 we have provided legal aid services to 19493 people across the country. Of these, 9016 were men, 10448 were women and 29 were children. We have taken the initiative to provide one full time office staff to the District Legal Aid Committee (DLAC) to provide full time support to the DLAC and to the Chairman. In addition we have taken up different projects and programs in collaboration with different development agencies such as UNDP and USAID to speed up the implementation process of legal aid. We are also coordinating with our development partners to create models and mechanisms so that these may be replicated across the country on a fast track process. There are several challenges ahead of us especially to set up a wide network and develop wide outreach. With a view to form committees at upazila and union levels, National Legal Aid Services Organization (Formation of Upazila & Union Committee, its Duties, Functions etc.) Regulation, 2011 has already been formulated. Under the legal obligation of such Regulation a number of 482 Upazila Committees and 4597 Union Committees have been formed throughout the country. Enormous tasks are before us therefore I request all citizens, especially the legal community to join hands to strengthen the work of the NLASO.

Md. Zafrul Hasan

Director (Senior District Judge)

National Legal Aid Services Organization

Law and Justice Division

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