

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Trust Services (BLAST) hereby invites **skilled Individual** to show their expression of interest for the position as lead consultant to conduct **Comprehensive Study on the Protection, Rehabilitation and Reparation and Accountability Mechanisms Available Through National Human Rights Systems in Bangladesh** under “Supporting CSO advocacy for a Robust Human Rights System in Bangladesh” Project. **Esteemed individuals** with relevant qualifications and experience are encouraged to apply.

Interested applicants requested to submit following documents:

- a) Expression of Interest
- b) Copy of CV/Resume
- c) Financial Proposal
- d) E-TIN certificate
- e) Tax Return Certificate and Acknowledge (updated)
- f) Copy of NID
- g) Documents of relevant experience (previous agreement/contract of similar assignment).

Assignment brief objective	To lead and conduct a comprehensive study on the overall human rights system in Bangladesh, outlining the mechanisms for protection, prosecution and reparations for victims, the NHRC’s structural gaps and mandate limitations in statute and practice in responding to human rights violations and the role of CSOs in ensuring state accountability. See the detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) Annexure 1 (Click here) .
Address and Last Date of Submission	On or before 2.00pm, 12 April 2026 at purchase@blast.org.bd mentioning subject line ‘ Application for lead consultant to Comprehensive Study ’ (Maximum file size : 15-20 MB).
Evaluation	Submitted applications will be evaluated based on following criteria. 1. Educational qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced degree (Master’s or PhD preferred) in Law, Human Rights, Criminology, Sociology, Political Science, Development Studies, or a related discipline.• Specialisation in human rights systems, constitutional law, governance, or transitional justice will be considered an asset.

	<p>2. Professional Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 7–10 years of experience in academic research, policy research, or applied research in the field of human rights, rule of law, or governance. • Demonstrated track record of leading or contributing to large-scale research studies, particularly those involving legal analysis and mixed-methods research. • Experience conducting research on national human rights institutions (NHRIs), accountability mechanisms, access to justice, or victim reparations frameworks. • Proven experience in designing and implementing qualitative research methodologies, including key informant interviews (KIIs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and stakeholder consultations. • Experience engaging with government institutions, national human rights bodies, civil society organisations, and/or international organisations is highly desirable. <p>3. Technical Competencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong analytical and writing skills, with the ability to synthesise complex legal and empirical findings into clear, policy-oriented outputs. • In-depth understanding of Bangladesh’s legal and institutional framework related to human rights protection and accountability. • Familiarity with international human rights standards, including the Paris Principles and relevant UN mechanisms. • Expertise in comparative legal analysis and institutional assessment. • Demonstrated capacity to lead research teams, ensure methodological rigour, and maintain quality assurance across research outputs. • Ability to translate research findings into practical recommendations for policymakers, national institutions, and civil society actors. • Sensitivity to ethical considerations in human rights research, including working with vulnerable populations and applying trauma-informed approaches. <p>4. Submission of Financial Proposal</p>
VAT and Tax	Financial proposal should include Tax (15%) and VAT (15%). VAT and tax will be deducted at source from the awarded amount.
Rights	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) management reserves the right to accept or reject part/ whole of any or all the application without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Annexure 1**Terms of Reference**

Consultant for Leading a Comprehensive Study on the Protection, Rehabilitation and Reparation and Accountability Mechanisms Available Through National Human Rights Systems in Bangladesh

1. INTRODUCTION OF THE ORGANISATION

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) is the largest specialised national non-governmental legal services organisation in Bangladesh. It provides access to a comprehensive range of legal services, including information, advice, referral, mediation, and litigation across both informal and formal justice systems. BLAST also engages in research, advocacy, strategic litigation, and capacity-building initiatives. Operating with a workforce of over 300 professionals, including lawyers, researchers, and paralegals, BLAST has a presence in 23 district offices and numerous community legal clinics in Dhaka's informal settlements. It leverages a robust pro bono network of 2600+ lawyers to serve marginalised populations.

2. BRIEF PROJECT BACKGROUND

BLAST, a national legal service and human rights organization, is implementing the project titled "Supporting CSO advocacy for a Robust Human Rights System in Bangladesh" (NHRC – ACT) funded by the Danish Institute of Human Rights (DIHR). The project is grounded in the recognition that an impartial, free, proactive and responsible National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) constitutes a foundational pillar of democratic governance, public accountability, and the realization of the protection and promotion of citizens' human rights. In Bangladesh, vulnerable, marginalised and at-risk communities and individuals often fall victim to human rights violations, perpetrated by the organs of the state and non-state actors. Protection of citizens' human and fundamental rights is the state's duty, where civil society organisations exist to ensure state accountability and to promote rights-based governance. Statutory obligations of the country ensure that an independent and impartial NHRC be constituted to act as a protector of citizens' human rights, playing a crucial role in building state accountability and ensuring adequate rehabilitation and reparation for victims. The NHRC-ACT project seeks to develop robust civil society engagement with Bangladesh's NHRC in order to make it more accessible to victims, particularly from marginalised and vulnerable communities, and to support the NHRC in ensuring full alignment and compliance with globally accepted standards such as the Paris Principles.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**3.1. Overall Objective:**

Lead and conduct a comprehensive study on the overall human rights system in Bangladesh, outlining the mechanisms for protection, prosecution and reparations for victims, the NHRC's

structural gaps and mandate limitations in statute and practice in responding to human rights violations and the role of CSOs in ensuring state accountability.

3.2. Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study are divided into three components as described below-

Component A: Available mechanisms of human rights redress and remedy

- Identify constitutional provisions and existing legal frameworks safeguarding human and fundamental rights of individuals.
- Identify the role of independent organisations such as the NHRC and CSOs in upholding human rights and ensuring state accountability.
- Identify available mechanisms for victims to claim remedy or redress for human rights violations (justice system / international mechanisms / NHRC mechanisms) and analyse the gaps and limitations for each.

Component B: Analysis of the NHRC and its mandate

- Identify the practical and statutory gaps or limitations of the NHRC and its mandate of protecting human rights.
- Analyse procedural and practical realities faced by the NHRC in responding to human rights violations.
- Engage with victims of human rights to assess their experience of navigating the NHRC complaints mechanism.
- Analyse the extent to which Bangladesh's NHRC aligns with the best practices outlined in the Paris Principles.
- Develop key actionable points for the NHRC and for the government to ensure compliance with Paris Principles.

Component C: Civil Society Organisation capacity and responsibilities

- Analyse the role of CSOs in protecting at-risk communities and supporting victims of human rights violations.
- Assess the level of engagement of selected CSOs with the NHRC and its complaint mechanisms.
- Develop practical guidance for grassroots CSOs to engage with the NHRC's complaints and reporting mechanism.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The consultants will develop a comprehensive three-part research study ensuring that all objectives highlighted above are addressed. The findings from the study will be disseminated among relevant stakeholders such as the NHRC, DIHR, relevant ministries and civil society organisations through a series of dissemination and validation workshops.

The Lead Consultant will be responsible for:

- Conducting a **desk review** of relevant constitutional provisions, statutory frameworks, and jurisprudence relating to human rights protection in Bangladesh.
- Undertaking a **comparative legal analysis** of the mandate, powers, and functional scope of the NHRC in relation to other national human rights institutions.
- Assessing the **alignment of the NHRC with the Paris Principles**, including its independence, mandate, accountability, and effectiveness.
- Designing and overseeing **qualitative data collection**, including key informant interviews with human rights defenders, civil society organisations, and grassroots community-based groups to assess awareness, accessibility, and effectiveness of human rights protection mechanisms, including the NHRC.
- Guiding and supervising **in-depth interviews with victims/survivors of human rights violations** to capture lived experiences related to access to remedies and redress mechanisms.
- Leading the **analysis and synthesis of findings**, integrating both legal and field-based evidence.
- Facilitating **validation workshops** with CSOs, NHRC representatives, and DIHR to ensure accuracy, inclusivity, and relevance of findings.
- Preparing a **comprehensive research report**, along with policy-oriented summaries and recommendations.

Team Structure and Support

To ensure effective implementation, the Lead Consultant will be supported by:

- A **Research Officer**, engaged by BLAST, who will assist with legal research and analysis under the guidance and supervision of the Lead Consultant.
- One or more **Research Assistants**, engaged by BLAST, who will support field-level data collection, including conducting interviews and gathering qualitative data, in accordance with the methodology and tools developed by the Lead Consultant.

The Lead Consultant will provide overall methodological direction, quality assurance, and oversight of all research components.

4.3. Language Requirement:

- The study shall be developed in English
- Key materials, summaries, and presentation aids must be translated into Bangla to ensure accessibility for local CSOs.
- Language must be clear and practice-oriented.

5. FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED

BLAST will extend the following support to facilitate the successful completion of the assignment:

- Provision of **relevant project documents**, background materials, and contextual information.
- Access to **legal research resources and databases**, where available.
- Engagement of a **Research Officer and Research Assistants** to support legal analysis and field data collection, respectively.
- **Coordination support** for stakeholder engagement, including scheduling and facilitating interviews and consultations.
- **Introduction and liaison support** with key stakeholders, including the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) and other relevant institutions.
- **Logistical and organisational support** for validation and dissemination workshops, as required.

6. LIST OF DELIVERABLES

Deliverable	Description	Timeline
Inception Report	Workplan, methodology	Week 1-2
Data collection	KIIs, IDIs and desk review	Week 3-5
Draft Research report	Research report to include agreed upon contents	Week 6-7
Final report	Revised report, including Bengali summaries of selected excerpts and summaries	Week 8

6.1. Period of Performance:

Total duration: 8 weeks from the date of contract signing.

7. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

7.1. Educational Qualifications

- Advanced degree (Master’s or PhD preferred) in Law, Human Rights, Criminology, Sociology, Political Science, Development Studies, or a related discipline.
- Specialisation in human rights systems, constitutional law, governance, or transitional justice will be considered an asset.

7.2. Professional Experience

- Minimum 7–10 years of experience in academic research, policy research, or applied research in the field of human rights, rule of law, or governance.

- Demonstrated track record of leading or contributing to large-scale research studies, particularly those involving legal analysis and mixed-methods research.
- Experience conducting research on national human rights institutions (NHRIs), accountability mechanisms, access to justice, or victim reparations frameworks.
- Proven experience in designing and implementing qualitative research methodologies, including key informant interviews (KIIs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and stakeholder consultations.
- Experience engaging with government institutions, national human rights bodies, civil society organisations, and/or international organisations is highly desirable.

7.3. Technical Competencies

- Strong analytical and writing skills, with the ability to synthesise complex legal and empirical findings into clear, policy-oriented outputs.
- In-depth understanding of Bangladesh’s legal and institutional framework related to human rights protection and accountability.
- Familiarity with international human rights standards, including the Paris Principles and relevant UN mechanisms.
- Expertise in comparative legal analysis and institutional assessment.
- Demonstrated capacity to lead research teams, ensure methodological rigour, and maintain quality assurance across research outputs.
- Ability to translate research findings into practical recommendations for policymakers, national institutions, and civil society actors.
- Sensitivity to ethical considerations in human rights research, including working with vulnerable populations and applying trauma-informed approaches.