



**ASTHA: Strengthening Access to Multi-sectoral Public Services for GBV Survivors in
Bangladesh
Scope of Work for the Implementing Partner**

Background and context of the project

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global phenomenon that exists beyond cultural, geographical, religious, social and economic contexts. It is one of the most prevalent and worst forms of human rights violations in the world, which undermines the health, safety and dignity of its victims. The incidence of GBV is alarmingly high in Bangladesh. Despite this high prevalence of GBV, it is important to note that a majority of women (73 percent) who experience partner physical or sexual violence, did not disclose it to anyone¹. An analysis of the prevalence of violence and the reasons cited for the acts of violence reveals a context where structured gender inequality and deep-rooted patriarchal socio-cultural norms shape the perceptions and behavior of men and women in that society.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is, globally and in Bangladesh as well, the lead UN agency addressing the physical and emotional consequences of GBV and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. UNFPA has supported the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) in its GBV prevention and response efforts. In this connection, UNFPA with support from the Embassy of Netherlands has recently initiated a 4 year (Nov 2017-Dec 2021) project, 'ASTHA: Strengthening Access to Multi-sectoral Public Services for GBV Survivors in Bangladesh', components of which will be implemented through a national NGO. ASTHA is part of UNFPA's 9th Country programme and is aligned with the National Women's Development Policy (2011). The project will contribute to the accomplishment of key national development priorities of gender equality and women's empowerment as detailed in the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) and the *National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children (2013-2025)*.

The proposed project will also contribute to the two UNDAF thematic pillars: 1. Develop and implement improved social policies and programmes that focus on good governance, reduction of structural inequalities and advancement of vulnerable individuals and groups and UNDAF Pillar 3. Increase opportunities, especially for women and disadvantaged groups to contribute to and benefit from economic progress. ASTHA will also contribute to the achievement of SDG priorities including SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls, SDG 3: Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Well-being for All, SDG 10: Reduce Inequality within and Among Countries, SDG 16: Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for all and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at all Levels.

ASTHA has identified key strategies to achieve the aforementioned outcomes which include capacity development of relevant stakeholders including Government and CSOs; improving service delivery through the establishment and operationalization of women's help desks at police stations and Courts in project districts; increasing community engagement and awareness creation by strengthening the role of community watch groups in mitigating GBV

¹ BBS VAW Survey 2015



risks at the community level, especially in emergency contexts; improving coordination among different sectors; and identifying issues for policy advocacy.

The overall objective of the project is increased utilization of multi-sectoral GBV response services in selected districts of Bangladesh by having in place an effective multi-sectoral referral system so that Gender Based Violence (GBV) survivors have increased access to multi-sectoral response services for GBV survivors, and there is increased positive attitudes among community members about harmful gender norms and behaviors that perpetuate violence.

All activities of ASTHA, under the coordination of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) and in collaboration with the police, legal, health and social sectors, will be implemented in *12 upazila*² (3 selected upazilas and all unions of the each selected Upazila) *from Jamalpur, Patuakhali, Bogra and Cox's Bazar districts*. ASTHA targets vulnerable populations at risk of GBV, particularly women and girls who do not have access to multi-sectoral services as a result of poverty, social exclusion, statelessness, geographic distance, extreme weather conditions and lack of transport.

Under the overall guidance of the Chief, Gender Unit of UNFPA and the day to day monitoring and supervision of the ASTHA Project Manager, the Implementing Partner (IP) organization will implement district level activities mentioned under the scope of work, coordinate internal and external communications and liaise with district government stakeholders as and when necessary. ASTHA will be implemented through a national NGO and its scope of work will be as follows:

Scope of work:

Improve Coordination

- Establishing an intra and inter-agency feedback mechanism and maintaining the GBV MIS database to promote a safe and ethical system for standardized collection, analysis, sharing and management of GBV related data (functional GBV MIS) under the GBV cluster, as a network/forum of GO-NGO working on GBV issues;
- Establishing a model referral pathway engaging multi-sectors in GBV response and make it functional in selected districts [union to district level];
- Establishing linkages with other service providers to ensure district-level alternative and temporary shelter programming options for survivors and their dependents in acute danger
- Forming a referral committee led by the District Women Affairs Officer (DWAO) by engaging GO and NGO multi-sectoral service providers to improve inter-agency coordination in both development and humanitarian settings;
- Providing technical assistance to organize regular meetings of the referral committee to monitor the performance of the GBV referral system in districts;
- Initiating the GBV cluster mechanism at district level following the national model to engage service providers to respond to and prepare for GBV in emergencies and facilitate their regular meetings;

² Ramu, Teknaf and Ukhiya in Cox's Bazar; Golachipa, Kalapara and Mirzagonj in Patuakhali, Dewangonj, Sarishabari and Islampur in Jamalpur; and Sadar, Nandigram and Sonatola in Bogura