

Program Profile

Program	Program name	“Enhancing Access to Justice in Bangladesh: Bridging Law, Policy and Practice through ADR”
	Category	A6. Social Responsibility (former Ethical Values)

Summary of Program

Program Name	“Enhancing Access to Justice in Bangladesh: Bridging Law, Policy and Practice through ADR”
Category	A6. Social Responsibility- (Former Ethical Values).
Abstract of Program	This program explores the evolving role of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in Bangladesh as a means to address inefficiencies and delays in the formal justice system. While Bangladesh has enacted significant laws like the Arbitration Act 2001 and incorporated ADR provisions into the Code of Civil Procedure to promote out-of-court dispute settlements, the practice remains underdeveloped. There exists a substantial gap between the policy framework and practical implementation due to factors such as limited public awareness, inadequate training among practitioners, institutional disinterest, and the absence of a unified national strategy for ADR integration. The study critically analyses these issues by reviewing existing legislation, policies, academic literature, and case law, combined with qualitative methods like interviews and focus groups with legal professionals, decision-makers, and ADR users. The objective is to assess the regulatory regime, identify loopholes, and propose reforms to strengthen ADR as a tool for timely and accessible justice. The program also reflects on how ADR mechanisms can alleviate court congestion and serve as an inclusive, cost-effective alternative, particularly in civil, family, and commercial disputes. By emphasizing social responsibility, this initiative aims to contribute to a justice system that upholds fairness, efficiency, and accessibility, ensuring that the broader population, especially marginalized communities, can realize their right to justice without undue delay.

Details of Program

Planning

Objectives	Long-term Goals	Develop a coherent national ADR policy; institutionalize ADR in Bangladesh’s justice system.
	Short-term Targets	Conduct research, workshops, awareness campaigns, and pilot ADR projects.
	Rationale	Chronic delays and backlog in courts restrict timely justice; ADR offers cost-effective and quicker alternatives.
Subject (Leader)	Initiator(s)	HASAN, Md. Tanim

	Champion(s)	HASAN, Md. Tanim
	Major team member(s)	N/A
Environment	Nature/Society	ADR fosters social harmony by resolving disputes amicably.
	Industry/Market	Legal/arbitration services, NGOs, judicial institutions.
	Citizen/Government	Supported by Ministry of Law, Bar Council, NGOs (e.g., BLAST).
Resources	Human resources	Researchers, legal experts, ADR practitioners.
	Financial resources	Moderate – mainly for workshops, consultations, awareness.
	Technological resources	Legal databases, case management software, virtual ADR platforms.
Mechanism	Strategy (Weight/Sequence)	☐ Review laws and policies. ☐ Capacity-building workshops. ☐ Awareness campaigns. ☐ Pilot ADR projects. ☐ Policy dialogues for national integration.
	Organization	World University of Bangladesh (WUB) responsible for program execution.
	Culture	Encourages justice innovation, community engagement, and student-professor collaboration.
Doing		
Launch date		10 July 2025
Responsible organization		World University of Bangladesh (WUB)
Program content and process		Combines legal research with fieldwork (interviews, focus groups, pilot projects). Evaluates ADR's effectiveness and builds recommendations for a national framework.
Key highlights of the content/process		☐ Strong legal foundation but weak implementation. ☐ Capacity-building and awareness are essential. ☐ Need for unified national ADR policy.
Differences from traditional approaches		Moves away from litigation towards cooperative, community-driven dispute resolution.
Progress as of today		Ongoing.

Problems in implementation	Resistance from legal community, low awareness, limited funding.
Approaches to solve the problems	Advocacy via bar associations, showcasing ADR success stories, partnerships with NGOs/donors.
Completion date, if completed	Still in progress.
Seeing	
Impacts on students	Practical ADR training, internships, ethical legal education.
Impacts on professors	Research opportunities, stronger community engagement.
Impacts on university administration	Positions WUB as an innovator in justice delivery.
Responses from industry/market	Corporate sector and firms welcome ADR-trained professionals.
Responses from citizen/government	Judiciary and Ministry support ADR to reduce backlog.
Measurable output (revenues)	Policy briefs, training manuals, research publications, proposed ADR framework.
Measurable input (expenses)	Moderate financial investment.
Cost-benefit analysis for effectiveness	Low cost vs. high social and systemic benefits.
Future Planning	
Where does the project go from here?	☐ To expand ADR research to community/informal justice systems. ☐ To establish WUB ADR Centers for research, training, and service. ☐ To Promote cross-border learning on ADR in South Asia.
Addendum	
Exhibits, pictures, diagrams, etc.	N/A
Reports, mimeos, monographs, books, etc.	☐ Amin, M. (2012). <i>Alternative Dispute Resolution: A Perspective from Bangladesh</i> ☐ Halim, M.A. (2015). <i>ADR in Bangladesh: Issues and Challenges</i> ☐ Hossain, K. (2020). <i>Prospects and Challenges in Bangladesh</i> ☐ Bangladesh Law Commission reports
Others which may help explain the program (including website links)	https://www.undp.org/bangladesh