

Annual Report
October 2003 – September 2004

JOBS Project
A USAID Funded Initiative
Implemented by
IRIS Center at the University of Maryland

JOBS
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BANGLADESH

**Job Opportunities and Business Support Program
(JOBS)**

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Coordinating GoB Agency	Ministry of Industries
Coordinating GoB Entities	Ministry of Planning Bureau of NGO Affairs Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation Economic Relations Division
Implementing Partner	IRIS Center University Research Corporation International University of Maryland, USA

**Annual Report
(October 2003 – September 2004)**

**IRIS Center
University Research Corporation (URCI)**

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Executive Summary

The Jobs Opportunities and Business Support Program (JOBS), implemented by the IRIS Center at the University of Maryland, has successfully concluded its seventh year of operation, and is poised to enter its eighth and final year. In its seventh year, JOBS continued to expand markets, increase exports, and ensure sustainability of Bangladesh's small and medium businesses.

As outlined in the business plan submitted at the beginning of the year, JOBS reorganized its teams during the early part of this year, merging the five different components of JOBS into two vertically integrated distinct teams, namely, Sector Development and ICT. This allowed for better coordination in carrying out activities and delivering ever better results, thus proactively changing the way "business" is conducted in Bangladesh at all levels. The project continued to focus much more on developing and supporting mechanisms and processes that will help spur and sustain economic growth rather than the growth of individuals. JOBS accomplished this well beyond expectations during the year as it grew into a dominant force within the development world.

Bangladesh suffered heavy flooding during the later part of the fiscal year. As a result, it was not always possible to implement activities in the field. Hence, much of the last six months of FY 2004 was spent analyzing lessons learned and putting together new innovative initiatives for the private sector and enabling environment development. However, despite these constraints, JOBS achieved significant successes during the year, and surpassed its targets. The following numbers illustrate JOBS' accomplishments:

- *Generated sales growth of \$40.17 million, of which \$15.11 million was export sales. For every dollar invested in JOBS by USAID (\$700,000 for the year), the Program has generated \$57 in sales;*
- *Exceeded our sales target, set at \$12 million, for the year by \$28 million;*
- *Developed 10 new clusters, comprising of 200 small businesses, and forward linked them to buyers;*
- *Leveraged excess of \$700,000 in cost sharing from partners thus exceeding our committed target of \$190,000 for the year.*

Sector Development Program:

JOBS has noted significant successes in individual sector development work. For instance, in the handmade paper sector, JOBS facilitated group participation of four major leading handmade paper producers from Bangladesh in the Birmingham Gift Fair, where they have received export orders worth US\$800,000. It should be noted that until this event, Bangladesh has averaged handmade paper exports of less than \$50,000/year.

Furthermore, JOBS also launched programs with international partners like CBI (Center for Promotion of Export from Developing Countries) of Netherlands in the Personal Protective Equipment Sector, ITC (International Trade Center) of Geneva in the area of market

information and with Katalyst in the plastic sector of Bangladesh. Moreover partnership with IRG, MACH and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce has been established for wider private sector, as well as sectoral based, development. In the past year **JOBS provided training to 1,178 workers** of different small and medium enterprises almost **90% of whom were women**.

JOBS also continues to advocate to the Government of Bangladesh, academia and stakeholders for policy and practical changes to establish a business enabling regulatory environment that will encourage and enhance the growth of the nation's enterprises. As an example of this, we were asked by EPB to assist in every international trade fair that they will be participating and funding for this year. We have since assisted their participation in 3 trade fairs.

ICT Program:

The Cisco Networking Academy program, the keystone of JOBS ICT efforts, has continued to evolve and is comprised of 10 academies, with three in waiting. Under JOBS leadership, this program, as claimed by Cisco, has become **the fastest growing program in the world** – of the 22 academies which have been established in the 7 Asian LDCs since 1997, 10 have been established in Bangladesh in the past two years.

Additionally, in the past 12 months, JOBS also steered the **Women in Technology (WIT)** program, a collaboration between the Institute for International Education and Cisco, to success and currently there are over 100 women who are participating in this scholarship program.

In the policy arena, the IT Law is (still) under progress, where the JOBS Director is expending a substantial portion of time and effort directly working with the Minister to push ahead the passage of the IT Law. Beyond ongoing work in the regulatory environment, **JOBS has assisted in chairing of the donor working group on ICT** and organized two meetings of the partners, including one with the Minister of Science and ICT to promote better coordination. Furthermore,

Under the private sector development program of ICT, this past year saw various workshops conducted in collaboration with various partners including: **Nationwide Internet Access and Online Applications, and Marketing and Selling IT Solutions: What works?** Effort also continued to launch the second Business Linkage Tour, and the first of its kind IT Country Profile was developed for use by trade fair participants from Bangladesh and various government bodies in promoting the country as a destination for ICT business and investment.

To summarize, JOBS has continued to deliver ahead of its stated goals. It has

- **surpassed its activity targets in the SMME arena;**
- **generated over \$40 million in sales growth, comprising of \$15 million in export sales;**
- **engaged 1,200 MEs in increasingly productive activity;**

- **Created 2000 new jobs through training, market facilitation and other services;**
- **provided BDS to 35 SMEs;**
- **established a partnership with Cisco to facilitate IT-related HRD by establishing eight academies;**
- **piloted numerous initiatives in the ICT arena including two workshops;**
- **organized two trainings on market information with International Trade Center;**
- **established an office at CCCI; and,**
- **successfully targeted women by ensuring that 90% women benefited from our initiatives.**

In an effort to better inform the public and the larger donor and research community of JOBS extensive successes, as touched on above, the project website was launched in April 2004, providing a one-stop shop for contact and access to all documentation stemming from the lengthy list of JOBS activities. Additionally, as a means of communicating the sector development model in all of its aspects, JOBS initiated what is intended to be a series of “Meet the Press” events at which JOBS leadership discuss a single sector, the plan for intervention, and then cede the floor to the clients themselves to relate their own personal experiences.

As the JOBS Project enters its eighth year under the current Cooperative Agreement, it continues to evolve into a “flagship” for economic and enterprise initiatives in Bangladesh covering a wide range of economic sectors. The Project’s components function as separate entities with their own objectives, yet with a synergistic relationship among them that has allowed the Project to develop a holistic approach that is proactively changing the way business is conducted in Bangladesh at all levels.

1.0 Introduction

JOBS spent much of FY 2003-2004 analyzing lessons learned and responding with innovative initiatives for the development of the private sector and the enabling environment.

Meanwhile, despite the intensity of these activities, the Project has continued to build on past successes, reaching new milestones during the period covered in this report.

The sector development program moved forward with enthusiastic efforts that promise to not only increase export sales and generate employment but also strengthen the underpinning of the economy to ensure the sustainability of the assisted sectors. Facing the final year of the project, JOBS focused heavily, in activities and planning, on the capacity building of business associations and Chambers, the intention being to transfer as much technical expertise and skill to these groups as possible. Initial activities indicate that these groups have not developed to cater to the needs of their member entrepreneurs and the alteration of the existing culture has become the focal task of the remaining months.

ICT activities took place within four broad areas:

- e-HRD – Coordinating a nationwide networking education program leading to internationally recognized professional certification.
- E-Policy – Ongoing work with GoB on passage of IT Law
- e-Governance – Introducing tools such as websites and databases to facilitate membership services for organizations such as business chambers
- e-Commerce – Offering assistance, guidance, and direct business contacts for private companies preparing to enter foreign markets, disseminating IT sector-specific information to inform and attract potential clients abroad

As with the sector development program, the main focus of the year was to consolidate lessons-learned to date and to utilize this knowledge in the creation of a strategic action plan for ICT activities going into the final year of the project, with an increased focus on the development of human resources and access to market for Bangladeshi IT companies. Work continued with the IT business associations as well as with GoB in introducing the IT Law.

During the last six months of FY 2004 JOBS and client enterprises faced the daunting challenge of two periods of extensive flooding, seriously impacting not only day-to-day life and business but making it difficult to adhere to prepared action plans and timelines. Nevertheless, despite the difficulty, JOBS' achievements went well beyond expectations:

- **formation of ten new clusters, comprised of 200 small businesses**
- **partnerships with other USAID projects such as International Resource Group (IRG) Nishorgo Project (a forest development project) and MACH-II, a fisheries project**

- **linkages between JOBS assisted enterprises and major international and local buyers such as IKEA and the Satranji producers, and AP (Ayurvedic Products) and the Modhupur Bee Keeping cluster**
- **organization and participation in three major training events, in partnership with ITC, Geneva, focused on market information and dissemination**
- **launch of the JOBS website and initiation of a series of Meet the Press events to spread the word and learning**
- **Successful Business Linkage tour, Round 1 and kick-off of Round 2**
- **Production of country and sector specific print materials, in conjunction with Export Promotion Bureau**

Pursuant to the brief introduction above, details of activities follow.

2.0 Sector Development Program

JOBS' Sector Development Program objectives are to expand markets, increase exports, and ensure the sustainability of Bangladesh's small and medium sized businesses. Much of the team's effort during the past year was spent in consolidating the efforts in new sectors, building the local and international market linkage program and identifying opportunities to work with other national and international partners. Moreover, last year being the second last year of the project, the sector development program focused more on working with business chambers to increase their capacity, developing local resource pools of designers and technical specialists and working with international organizations. These organizations include ITC (International Trade Center) and CBI (Center for Promotion of Export from Developing Countries) to increase local expertise in market research and market information dissemination.

What follows is a summary of the major achievements of the program in the past year.

2.1 Major Achievements

2.1.1 Trade Map

To increase the capabilities of SME's working for international business development, the Market Information Center of JOBS, in association with the International Trade Center of UNCTAD/WTO in Switzerland, organized a workshop. Held in March 2004 in Dhaka, this workshop introduced web based tools to support strategic market analysis for international business development. TradeMap is an online database, which provides access to information on product trade flow and market access barriers for international business development. Six participants from the sector development program of JOBS, two from Governmental services, three from business associations and another twelve from different business support organizations in Bangladesh attended this workshop. JOBS acted as the in-country facilitator for the exercise as to date JOBS staff were the only individuals in Bangladesh trained on this database. The initial TradeMap workshop was so successful that ITC approached JOBS for a follow-on session in September 2004, to be held in Dhaka and targeted at government officials. In exchange for JOBS support for the follow-on, ITC agreed to lead a session in Chittagong as well, in partnership with the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Both September sessions were highly successful, attracting a diverse group of participants from business, government and academia, providing not only a venue for new technology tools, but also for free exchange of ideas and experiences across disciplines. In the Dhaka workshop, most of the participants were from different government agencies, business service organizations, chambers, associations, and donor groups. An interesting mix of academicians and entrepreneurs were seen participating in the Chittagong workshop.

2.1.2 BDS Study Tour

In October, as a part of their Study Tour for the Annual BDS (Business Development Service) Seminar held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 30 participants from all over the world, working with different donors and donor funded projects, visited Bangladesh. The main objective of the visit was to increase familiarity with the innovative works going on in the field of BDS in

Bangladesh. During the tour, the team visited the JOBS Project and one of its programs with BBRL (Bengal Braided Rugs Limited). JOBS team made a presentation during the trip to BBRL and the participants expressed its deep satisfaction with the JOBS value chain work model.

2.1.3 Coconut Shell Button

This year JOBS developed a cluster on coconut shell button production and delivered a 60 days long technical assistance program on coconut shell button production. 60 women received the two-phase training, delivered by an Indian trainer with the help of two local supervisors. JOBS jointly organized the training session with Button Hole Limited, a private coconut shell button producing firm. At the close of the program, Button Hole recruited the trainees at an average salary of Tk. 1,500 per month for 8 hours shifts. JOBS intention is to spread this technology as much as possible all over Bangladesh and create successful pilot clusters to motivate new investors. Coconut shell button production can be very attract to new entrepreneurs as it requires very low investment and with the growing knitwear industry in Bangladesh, the issue of market will never be a problem. In addition, the sector can create large number of jobs.

2.1.4 Honey

JOBS formed a cluster comprising of the beekeepers of Modhupur. Quality Development Training on honey was given to 50 (fifty) farmers with the goal of producing a product that would meet the market standards. The prime objective of the formation of this cluster was to explore the market. In this connection, JOBS approached many consumer goods manufacturing and marketing companies like SQUARE Consumer Products Ltd, Kohinoor Chemical Company Ltd. Acme Laboratories Ltd., and Ayurvedic Pharmacy (AP) Dhaka Ltd. The latter, AP, carried out a series of Lab tests, finally approving the sample, confirming the value of the training. After a series of negotiations, the farmers and AP agreed upon a deal and farmers have since supplied honey worth Tk. 1,000,000 (\$17,000) – no small feat for a group of small farmers from Modhupur.

2.1.5 Handmade Paper

Though the handmade paper sector is still at a very early stage in Bangladesh, it is undoubtedly getting stronger day by day with new groups of entrepreneurs joining. The stakeholders have also started to fully understand the prospects and show interest in the development of the sector. Following the sector development process, JOBS is now working to develop a group of local designers as a resource pool for the long term development of this sector. This year JOBS worked with the Design and Technology Center of GTZ (DTC) and eight leading exporters and producers of handmade paper and paper products to deliver a technical training. This was basically a product development training targeting a group of local designers working in different hand made paper producing firms. It was a six-month long training using local trainers, as well as expatriate trainers from Germany, to train the group. The products developed during this training period will be test marketed in the Paper World fair in Germany during January 2005. Earlier, JOBS facilitated group participation of four major hand-made paper producers in the Birmingham Gift Fair, where they received

export orders worth US\$800,000. Prior to this year, Bangladesh has averaged handmade paper exports below \$50,000/year.

2.1.6 Light Electrical

JOBS has been working, with leading private sector partners, on workforce development in the light electrical sector for the last two years. During this period, the project found a tremendous need for a good handbook/guide book on different technical issues of the light electrical sector. It was assumed that the handbook would be helpful for the new electricians as well as the technical graduates from the thousand government technical training institutes in the country. In the last six months, JOBS has worked closely with electrical engineers, professors from BUET and Dhaka University, and leading entrepreneurs to develop a training handbook, which is now in the press and expected to come out in mid December. The State Minister of Education has already shown interest in this handbook and measures have been taken to incorporate this book into the curriculum of Government Technical Schools.

2.1.7 Handmade Shoe

Last year JOBS developed a handmade shoe cluster in Konabari, Savar. The cluster caters to the need for handmade sandals in the four districts near Konabari and created employment opportunities for 30 women. A three month long training, delivered by a small private sector firm under JOBS' supervision, is now underway. After the training, the trainees will receive permanent employment in the cluster with an average income of Tk.1,200 per month. Following the close of training, JOBS plans to assist this cluster in developing market linkages as well as providing support in basic business management and accounting through our EDBM training.

2.1.8 Home Textile

In conjunction with the National Institute of Fashion and Design (NIFD) JOBS delivered a one month long designer development training for the home textile sector. Twenty designers from leading home textile producing firms participated in this training. A senior home textile designer from NIFD-India came and delivered this training. Bangladesh has exported home textile products worth US\$78 million in 2001-2002, \$85.5 million in 2002-2003 and almost \$97 million in 2003-2004. JOBS has helped this sector initially in worker development, trade fair participation and in other technical areas. The project's goal now is to develop the local training and design institutes as technical training providers to create a local resource pool within the local home textile producers rather than relying on expatriate designers hired out every time. Such trainings will also encourage the design institutes to look beyond the garments and fashion industry and will help them to structure curriculum as per the need of other growing industries in Bangladesh. To this end, these trained local designers can be used in the long run to develop clusters in other sectors..

2.1.9 Benarashi

JOBS has been working with almost 500 entrepreneurs in the Benarashi textile cluster in Mirpur for the last two years. This is one of the largest such clusters that exists and there is a strong tie between this group and the export oriented home textile sector. Despite the large

local and international market, the producers face great difficulty due to some small problems with their product and their management practices, namely color durability and lack of strategic planning capability.

The color and dyeing methods used in the Mirpur Benarashi cluster create a product with inferior color-durability, lacking the colour-fastness found in Indian Benarashi *Saree* and putting the Bangladeshi product at an immediate disadvantage. Last year a three-month long training was delivered to 25 supervisory level workers in the cluster on different durable coloring techniques. An expatriate trainer from India gave the training. In response to a desire for expansion and diversification amongst the cluster producers, JOBS also delivered EDBM training to a total of 52 entrepreneurs. Sessions on product selection and planning, market survey, costing-pricing, accounts record keeping, and establishing alternative market linkages provided them with the tools to analyze their options and chart a course for growth. There is still demand for further training in this cluster, focused on both the shortage of fashionable patterns currently available to the producers as well as a lack of skill in the transfer of those patterns that are available.

In addition, JOBS facilitated Tk.300,000 (\$5084) loans from an NGO called DSK (Dustha Shastho Kendra) for disbursement to three entrepreneurs from the same cluster (Tk.100,000 each). This amount was used for their business during the *Eid* festival season.

3.0 Training Program

Since inception, the JOBS Project has provided technical support to NGOs and their client entrepreneurs for capacity building, of both NGO staff and the entrepreneurs. JOBS has two policies for the provision of such capacity development efforts.

1. Provide the training on a fee-for-service basis, based on the BDS model.
2. Provide training on a cost-sharing basis, sharing the expense with NGOs and their clients.

During October 2003 to September 2004, the JOBS Training team conducted the following training sessions:

Name of the Course	Duration	Organization	Participants
Training on Curriculum Designing and Improving Facilitation Skills	03–09 Nov. 2003	10 different NGOs	12 Staff
Entrepreneurship Development and Business Management (EDBM) Training	08-15 Dec. 2003	Mirpur Banarashi Village	12 Entrepreneurs
EDBM (For Producers)	30 Dec. 03 – 5 Jan. 2004	14 Organizations CWDCR(Center for Women Development Center and Child rights), Khulna	17 Executives.
EDBM (For Producers)	14-21 Mar. 2004	Mirpur Shoe Cluster	11 Entrepreneurs
Refreshers Course on EDBM TOT	18- 22 Apr. 2004.	ILO Project	21 Staff of 7 ILO NGO partners
EDBM (For Producers)	09-16 May 2004.	Mirpur Banarashi Village	10 Entrepreneurs
EDBM (For Producers)	21-27 June 2004.	Swallows, Rajshahi	14 Entrepreneurs
EDBM (For Production Sector)	01-05 Aug. 2004.	Tamanna Foundation Office, Dhaka.	18 Entrepreneurs
EDBM (For Producer)	26 Aug.-2 Sept. 2004	Mirpur Banarashi Village	14 Entrepreneurs
EDBM (For Trader) New developed	25 Aug. 2004.	Padakhep (an NGO)	31 Staff

Moreover, the Training Team developed a course on EDBM especially for the small traders as per the demand of Padakhep an NGO operating in the Micro Enterprise sector. They have

requested JOBS to conduct 3 batches of the TOT (Training Of Trainers) course on EDBM for their mid level managers and 10 batches of EDBM training for their grass-roots entrepreneurs. Final settlement awaits price negotiation.

4.0 Loan Facilitation Program

Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs) are the largest portion of the employment support in Bangladesh and indeed, the foundation of the local private sector. The entrepreneurs behind them are playing a much larger role in development, but too often are held back by a lack of ready access to finance from local formal sector financial institutions. This limits their ability to expand their businesses, enter new markets, or initiate new enterprises.

As financing schemes for the smaller firms are costly and high-risk, many commercial banks avoid lending money to them, and concentrate on "safer" options such as financing larger local or multinational corporations. Though this approach is understandable it nevertheless dims the prospects for sustainable development by ignoring the necessity of bottom-up capital formation—a key factor in the job creation necessary for reduction of poverty and income inequalities. Proven models of profitable small business banking do exist that can be transferred from country to country, scaled up over time, and then replicated more widely for considerable development impact.

JOBS' Loan Facilitation Program is working since 1999 on this agenda, using several strategies to increase SMEs' easy access to capital under close cooperation with three commercial banks (Prime Bank Ltd., BASIC Bank Ltd. and Social Investment Bank Ltd.) This involves not only providing the loan facilitation assistance to SMEs to get easy access to finance from banks, but also several capacity building initiatives to improve commercial banks' SME lending skills and thus help tap into a potentially large and productive domestic market.

The following table lists the loans facilitated by JOBS from October 2003 – September 2004:

LFP from Oct 03 – Sept 04			
SL#	Name of the Bank	Amount in Tk.	Amount in US\$
1	Social Investment Bank Limited	36,25,000	63,120
2	Prime Bank Limited	28,15,000	49,003
3	BASIC Bank limited	58,50,000	102,374
	Total	1,22,90,000	214,497

Table 1: Loan disbursed through JOBS' facilitation

No effort toward poverty reduction in developing nations is sustainable without the growth of SMEs. One of the first steps toward a vibrant SME sector is the opening of more financing channels, and ensuring that they are focused on building strong partnerships and trust between SMEs and their local banks. This can have lasting impacts in helping local entrepreneurs to obtain the capital they need to build their businesses and create more jobs in economies that truly need new employment opportunities.

5.0 E-Commerce and ICT

It is now widely accepted by policy makers, enterprises and society at large that information and communications technologies (ICT) are the center of an economic and social transformation that is affecting all countries, world-wide. ICT and globalization have combined to create a new economic and social landscape and have brought fundamental changes in the way enterprises and economies function as a whole. As a developing country, Bangladesh is motivated to take part in this transformation and the e-Commerce and ICT Team of JOBS has been leading the ICT based development.

Despite the wide range of benefits that can be brought about by ICT, the development and adoption of ICT by the Government of Bangladesh has been slow. A number of factors can lay claim to the lack of progress: limited awareness, at the policy-making level, of what ICT can offer; insufficient telecommunications infrastructure and Internet connectivity; expensive Internet access; absence of adequate legal and regulatory frameworks; shortage of requisite human capacity; lack of entrepreneurship and a business culture open to change and transparency.

Taking into consideration the numerous constraints Bangladesh is facing in adopting e-Commerce and ICT, JOBS has implemented activities to address issues in the areas of human resource development, policy, governance, and trade as a part of the strategy for economic development and growth.

Activities undertaken in these areas during the last one year are highlighted below.

5.1 E-HRD

Between October 2003 and September 2004 the eight active Cisco Networking Academies maintained a student enrollment of over 500, while the first graduates exited the program – over 100 to date, 15 of whom were directly hired for positions in Singapore. An additional Academy was registered in November 2003. Upon the completion of the second instructor training session at BUET (begun in August) the program will have ten active Academies with participating students. Over the course of this year, the Bangladesh Cisco Networking Academy program has been recognized by Cisco as the fastest growing program in the Least Developed Countries Initiative.

The initial successes of the JOBS-Cisco partnership in Bangladesh have established the framework for expanded collaboration. Elli Takagaki of International Partnerships at Cisco Worldwide Education visited in June 2004 and initial talks are now underway to incorporate another Regional Academy that would allow for expansion into additional curriculum offered through the Academy program, namely IT Essentials. Further partnerships are being formalized with both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and ICT (MoSICT) as well as with the U.S. Peace Corps under the Digital Freedom Initiative.

In addition to coordinating the Academy Program in Bangladesh, JOBS acted as a facilitator to assist with the implementation in Bangladesh of the Women in Technology (WIT)

scholarship program, in association with the Institute for International Education, Cisco and USAID. With over 300 applications, WIT established the existence of a high level of interest in IT education among the women of Bangladesh. JOBS involvement allowed for the timely enrollment of students and start-up of classes despite several communications short-falls at the administrative level. Currently over 100 female students are enrolled in the all-female classes offered at the five participating Academies.

5.2 E-Policy

5.2.1 IT Act

To facilitate the development of an IT Act that fulfills the legal requirements for the implementation of e-Commerce and electronic signatures, JOBS has provided technical assistance to the GoB through the involvement of renowned international experts. During the past year JOBS has been monitoring the progress of the Act and moving towards its final passage into Law, working directly with the Minister of Science and ICT to scrutinize the details of the proposed Act and to incorporate the expert recommendations.

5.2.2 Donor Working Group on ICT

In an effort to better coordinate donor activities in distinct areas, such as ICT, the Local Consultative Group created working groups in May 2004. As one of the first donor-funded projects to actively engage in the development of e-Commerce and the ICT sector in Bangladesh, JOBS accepted to jointly chair (with USAID) the donor-working group on ICT from June 2004. In this capacity JOBS organized two meetings of the concerned donors, the latter with MoSICT to discuss their Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and areas of interest and possible coordination.

5.2.3 Internet Access and Applications

In May 2004 JOBS, in association with the U.S. National Science Foundation, Alexandria Research Institute of USA, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), BRAC University and Grameen Cyber Society organized a seminar on “Nationwide Internet Access & Online Applications”. Bringing together experts from Bangladesh, Canada, India, Nepal, Thailand and the United States, the workshop addressed important issues of national access: how to provide sustainable and affordable Internet access to the population of Bangladesh; why access is needed – what is the demand; last-mile solutions and the barriers to implementation; alternative approaches to overcome the obstacles.

5.3 E-Governance

JOBS supported the attendance of the Minister of Science and ICT at the 14th World Congress of IT (WCIT) held in Athens, Greece in May 2004, promoting the opportunity for professional networking. One of the three conference objectives was to “bridge the gap between cutting-edge solutions offered by the ICT sector and the goal of modern governments to upgrade public sector services provided to their citizens” rendering government attendance and representation all the more important. During the Congress ICT Ministers from more

than 25 Countries, Bangladesh included, endorsed the “Declaration of Political Leaders on the Technological Development in the Service of the Citizen”.

5.4 E-Commerce

As in 2002-2003 JOBS focused on capacity-building, adding work with the Export Promotion Bureau to the activities with ICT SME’s in order to support e-Commerce and ICT sector growth and influence the capacity of the governing body to provide such support themselves.

5.4.1 IT Market Linkage Tour Preparation

In 2002-2003 JOBS undertook an IT Business Development program with the assistance of USAID-DC, consisting of a workshop and selection process through which eight companies were chosen to participate in a Market Linkage tour in the U.S. This program continued with the rigorous preparation of those companies selected for participation from October 2003 through February 2004. The preparation included drafting an executive summary of corporate capabilities and a detailed marketing plan; developing an “elevator pitch” (a 20 second duration sales pitch) for the US market; preparing sales and marketing information for the US market; implementing internal, quality customer-support processes; developing effective presentation skills etc.

5.4.2 IT Market Linkage Tour

JOBS successfully coordinated the IT Market Linkage Tour for the selected companies in February 2004. During the trip the Bangladeshi entrepreneurs attended both a large reception where they met 115 senior executives from IT companies across the Mid-Atlantic region, as well as a smaller event at which they met with 37 local ICT executives. In addition, each delegate had at least three private meetings with senior executives from local technology companies during the course of the trip. A total of 28 companies had private meetings with Bangladeshi delegates. As a result, one company generated business worth \$ 20,000 for the development of prototype modules for the client. Having successfully completed the initial project the company is now negotiating a long-term business alliance as a strategic partner and other participating companies are building on initial contacts established during the tour.

5.4.3 ICT Country Profile

To promote ICT-based development and attract foreign investment to the sector, JOBS, in conjunction with EPB and with active support from MoSICT and the Ministry of Commerce, developed an ICT country profile. The profile provides information about the capabilities of Bangladeshi ICT companies and the sector as a whole, including benefits offered by the GoB in order to attract foreign investment and encourage private sector business partnerships. The ICT country profile will be distributed to all of Bangladesh’s trade missions and was sent to CeBIT 2004 in March.

5.4.4 Web site Development

To build the capacity of SME’s in the Chittagong region and to introduce ICT as a catalyst for business growth at the Association level, JOBS has assisted the Chittagong Chamber of

Commerce and Industries (CCCI) to develop their web site and members database. Additional training requirements for CCCI staff and officers, in order to maintain the web site and increase the use of ICT in daily business activities, have also been identified.

5.4.5 E-Marketing Workshop

JOBS, in association with Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) and the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA), organized a two-day workshop entitled “Marketing and Selling IT Solutions: What works?” in June 2004. The workshop was designed to help Bangladeshi IT companies to increase their capabilities to market, sell and deliver services to clients locally as well as worldwide. Experts from the US and Australia provided examples on how to apply e-marketing and e-Commerce techniques successfully.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Performance Monitoring Indicators

1st October 2003 - 30th September 2004

		1st Qtr. Total	2nd Qtr. Total	3rd Qtr. Total	4th Qtr. Total	Total	Target	YTD +/-
S O Indicator								
A	Total Annual Sales (million \$)	9.342	11.510	9.813	9.509	40.174	12.069	28.105
	Domestic Sales (million \$)	6.255	6.244	6.267	6.295	25.061	3.375	21.686
	Exports Sales (million \$)	3.087	5.266	3.546	3.214	15.113	8.694	6.419
IR Indicator								
5.1	More market-oriented policies, laws and regulations adopted by the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and/or NGOs and other private institutions							
A	Milestone scale for market-oriented policies	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5.2	Stronger business support institutions established							
A	Loan Disbursed by USAID assisted financial intermediaries (million \$)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
B	# of NFIs strengthened	4	3	8	6	21	24	-3
5.3	Improved performance of USAID-assisted enterprises in targeted sectors							
A	# of enterprises that enter new geographic markets after assistance from USAID	11	7	12	12	42	21	21
B	# of enterprises that adopt new technologies or management practices after assistance from USAID	10	20	6	5	41	32	9
	Male owned/operated	6	18	5	3	32	25	7
	Female owned/operated	4	2	1	2	9	7	2
C	# Value of financial resources raised by USAID assisted enterprises from all sources (million \$)	0.736	1.517	0.974	0.985	4.212	18.425	-14.213

Appendix 2: Sectors Export Sales

(1st October 2003 - 30th September 2004)

		2003 - 2004				
Sector Activities		1st Qtr. Total	2nd Qtr. Total	3rd Qtr. Total	4th Qtr. Total	Total
Footwear Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.624	0.964	0.426	0.402	2.416
Home Textile Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.525	0.842	0.814	0.603	2.784
Light Electrical Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.343	0.473	0.421	0.325	1.562
Handmade Paper Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.525	1.311	0.501	0.504	2.841
Floor Covering Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.321	0.385	0.502	0.503	1.711
PPE Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.205	0.375	0.312	0.325	1.217
Leather Goods Sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.214	0.346	0.201	0.164	0.925
Jute diversified product sector	Export sales (million \$)	0.226	0.325	0.274	0.327	1.152
*Other Sectors	Export sales (million \$)	0.104	0.245	0.095	0.061	0.505

Grand Total		3.087	5.266	3.546	3.214	15.113

* Other Sectors: Information Technology, Coconut Shell Buttons, Bamboo and Cane products, Jewelry and Agribusiness

** The second quarter export sales were higher because we participated in two international trade fairs (Birmingham and Domotex) on that period.

Appendix 3: List of Clusters (1st October 2003 – 30th September 2004)

List of Clusters

SI #	Name of the Course provided to the Clusters	Location	Stakeholders	Participants			Training Inaugural Date	Quarter	Products
				Male	Female	Total			
Quarter: October - December 2003									
Sector: Hometextile									
1	Advanced design/ product Development training to Hometextile Cluster	Tangi, Dhaka	Shangu Tex			30	15.11.03	Oct.-Dec.' 2003	Home and kitchen textile products
2	Advanced design/ product Development training to Hometextile Cluster	Savar, Dhaka	BD Tex			50	20.11.03	Oct.-Dec.' 2003	Home and kitchen textile products
3	Advanced Skill Development training to Benarashi Cluster	Mirpur, Dhaka	Sama Silk Industries	25		25	17.12.03	Oct.-Dec.' 2003	Benarashi Sharee
4	Product development training to Satranji Cluster	Nisbetgonj, Rangpur	Karupannya	15	35	50	10.12.03	Oct.-Dec.' 2003	Satranji
Sector: Jute Product									
5	Skill Development training to Sharishabari Jute Product Cluster	Birmallikpur, Sharishabari, Jamalpur	Triply Handicraft		25	25	04.12.03	Oct.-Dec.' 2003	Different types of jute bags

SI #	Name of the Course provided to the Clusters	Location	Stakeholders	Participants			Training Inaugural Date	Quarter	Products
				Male	Female	Total			
Sector: Livestock									
6	Skill Development training to Mollarchar Livestock Rearing Cluster (Char Region)	Mollarchar, Gaibandha	Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK)	3	27	30	20.11.03	Oct.-Dec.' 2003	Cow rearing & dairy milk
Quarter: January - March 2004									
Sector: Hometextile									
7	Product development training on Patchwork quilt.	Shyamoli, Dhaka	Conexpo	6	24	30	22.01.04	Jan.-Mar.' 2004	Patchwork Quilt
Sector: Coconut Shell Button									
8	Skill/product development training on Coconut Shell Button	Srdah, Rajshahi	Swallows Development Society		25	25	28.02.04	Jan.-Mar.' 2004	Coconut Shell Button
9	Skill/product development training on Coconut Shell Button	Mohammad pur, Dhaka	Button Hole		60	60	25.03.04	Jan.-Mar.' 2004	Coconut Shell Button
Sector: Handmade Paper									
10	Skill/product development training on Handmade Paper	Saturia, Manikgonj	SEDS		18	18	01.02.04	Jan.-Mar.' 2004	Handmade Paper

SI #	Name of the Course provided to the Clusters	Location	Stakeholders	Participants			Training Inaugural Date	Quarter	Products
				Male	Female	Total			
Quarter: April - June 2004									
Sector: Hometextile									
11	Skill Development Training on Manipuri Weaving	Kamalgonj, Moulvibazar	Manipuri Women Weavers Development Project		20	20	10.04.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Manipuri Dressess
Sector: Coconut Coir									
12	Skill Development Training on Geo-Textile	Banaripara, Barisal	Wax Lyrical	7	8	15	01.04.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Coconut coir products
Sector: Handmade Footwear									
13	Skill Development Training on Handmade Footwear	Bhola	Multipurpose Association for Social Services (MASS)		25	25	11.05.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Handmade Footwear
Sector: Jewelry									
14	Skill Development Training on Jewelry Products	Kishoregonj	BRAC		20	20	15.05.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Jewelry Products
15	Advanced Skill Development Training on Jewelry Products	Kishoregonj	BRAC		20	20	30.06.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Jewelry Products
Sector: Floor Covering									

SI #	Name of the Course provided to the Clusters	Location	Stakeholders	Participants			Training Inaugural Date	Quarter	Products
				Male	Female	Total			
16	Skill Development Training on Handmade Braided Rugs	Dhamrai, Dhaka	Bengal Braided Rugs Ltd. (BBRL)	4	56	60	15.05.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Handmade Braided Rugs
Sector: Jute Product									
17	Skill Development Training on Jute Diversified Products	Tongi, Dhaka	Green World	8	12	20	10.06.04	Apr.-June' 2004	Jute diversified products
Quarter: July - September 2004									
Sector: Hometextile									
18	Training on Apparel and Textile Design with quality control		Fashion Institute of Designing (FID)	10	20	30	08.08.04	July - Sep. 2004	Home Textile products
19	Advanced Skill Development training to Benarashi Cluster	Mirpur, Dhaka	Sayma Silk Industries	25		25	25.08.04	July - Sep. 2004	Benarashi Sharee
Sector: Coconut Shell Button									
20	Advanced Skill/product development training on Coconut Shell Button	Mohammadpur, Dhaka	Button Hole		60	60	08.08.04	July - Sep. 2004	Coconut Shell Button
Sector: Handmade Footwear									
21	Skill Development Training on Handmade Footwear	Konabari, Gazipur	Zenith Shoes		25	25	19.09.04	July - Sep. 2004	Handmade Footwear

