

Disability Rights Law Manual



**Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services
Trust (BLAST)**



**Harvard Law School Project on Disability
(HPOD)**

The rights of persons with disabilities are a pressing issue in the modern context of human rights work. Despite the absence of express legal protection of disability rights in Bangladesh, many procedural and substantive laws are relevant to ensuring such rights. This book compiles and comments upon the various provisions in Bangladesh laws that relate to disability rights, for easy reference by lawyers. It draws upon international disability rights law, the experiences of lawyers and organisations working to protect disability rights in Bangladesh and abroad, and the author's own professional knowledge and experience. As well as outlining the relevant laws, it discusses how practicing lawyers can develop an outlook that is sensitive to disability rights; and how to set up disabled people's organisations (DPOs) to claim and demand such rights.

This book is a must-have for lawyers engaged in the courts, disability rights organisations, students of law and social science, medical practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers.

Chapters:

1. The Mindset of a Disability Rights Lawyer
2. International Standards and Best Practices Regarding Disability Rights
3. Disability-specific Laws and Their Application in Bangladesh
4. Civil Matters
5. Criminal Matters
6. Constitutional Matters (Writ Jurisdiction)
7. Setting up Organisations and Relevant Instruments
8. Annexes (Pleadings/Orders)
9. Extracts of Relevant Laws

Praise for the Manual:

"Laws do not change the way that people think. That change can come only through awareness raising. Khondoker Shahriar Shakir deserves praise for such an effort to raise this awareness. Everyone - not only persons with disabilities deprived of their rights but all other members of society - will benefit from the publication of this book which compiles all the relevant Bangladeshi laws and rules alongside the international conventions."

Justice Md. Imman Ali, Appellate Division, Supreme Court of Bangladesh

"Thanks to Advocate Shakir's thoughtful and diligent work that has given rise to the Disability Rights Law Manual, I believe a new day will dawn on the practice of disability rights law in Bangladesh. The two chapters in particular that caught my attention regarded the mindset of a disability rights lawyer and the creation of organizations to protect disability rights. As a lawyer, these two chapters are especially relevant for understanding both the rights of persons with disabilities and also how to empower them."

Dr. Mizanur Rahman, Professor, Law Department, Dhaka University
Chairman, National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh

"Among Lawyers there is an absence of expertise regarding the rights of persons with disabilities, and persons with disabilities are deprived of different kinds of remedies because of his unclear understanding of this country's laws. Thanks to BLAST's initiative, this collection of laws, regulations and other documents relating to the disability rights will serve a valuable and important role for persons with disabilities and those who are working to establish their rights."

Dr. Shahnaz Huda, Professor & Chairman, Department of Law, University of Dhaka

Khondoker Shahriar Shakir is a lawyer practicing in the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. Shakir has made involvement in public interest law a large part of his professional life. He has conducted public interest cases regarding disability rights, including landmark challenges to the participation of qualified persons with disabilities in examinations for the civil service and judiciary. He has also lectured part time at the University of Chittagong, and is involved as a Panel Lawyer with BLAST, Ain o Salish Kendra, ADD International and other organisations.

The Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) www.blast.org.bd is a national legal services and human rights organisation that provides free legal aid from the frontlines of the formal justice system to the apex court. BLAST has long provided legal aid to persons with disabilities, including through public interest litigation, and is currently working to develop more specialized legal services to secure the rights of persons with disabilities, with support from HPOD through an initiative titled "Establishing a Disability Rights Law Practice in Bangladesh".

The Harvard Law School Project on Disability (HPOD) www.hpod.org is a global disability law and policy center at Harvard University founded with a mission to support the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities throughout the world. Specifically, HPOD provides technical support in legislation and litigation, provides human rights trainings and resources, and conducts academic research.

"Limited copies of the Manual are currently available for legal aid lawyers and not for profit organisations. The Manual will be available online from 1 June 2012 at www.blast.org.bd"