

Company Profile

Somra-MBL limited



Somra Group

Since 1988

Somra-MBL Limited was born **SOMRA (Social, Opinion and Marketing Research Associates)** in **1988**, as a private proprietorship concern, to cater to the ever increasing need for professional survey research services in Bangladesh.

Beginning with two full time researchers, a small team of dedicated support personnel, two computers and 1000 square feet of office space, **SOMRA** grew very fast during 1988-1993, mainly due to the dedication, professionalism, and obsession for high quality standards of the small research team.

In **1993**, **SOMRA** was too big, both in terms of infrastructure as well as business turnover, to continue functioning as a private proprietorship concern. Therefore, the “house” was re-organised into a private limited company, and the Government of Bangladesh registered it as **Somra Limited**.

During **1993-1997**, **Somra Limited** continued to grow fast, achieving great successes both at home and abroad. The company’s main researchers received recognition from world professional bodies like the Market Research Society (**MRS**) of UK, the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (**ESOMAR**), the American Marketing Association (**AMA**), Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (**AMIC**), etc. As a result, the company, by strictly following the codes of conduct set by these organisations, achieved even higher standards and worldwide recognition.

During **1997-1998**, one of the largest survey research organisations of the world **Market Behaviour Limited (MBL) Plc.**, headquartered in the UK, having many offices in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, accorded recognition to **Somra Limited** as a befitting partner and, subsequently, on **12 November 1998**, acquired 35% shares in **Somra Limited** to make it a part of the worldwide organisation. The company was re-registered with the Government of Bangladesh as **Somra-MBL Limited**.

Somra-MBL Limited simultaneously became a part and full member of a larger worldwide survey research group – NFO (National Family Opinion) Research Worldwide, Inc., headquartered in the USA (NYSE listed company), because NFO fully acquired the MBL Group.

After NFO was taken over by TNS (another global market research group) in 2005, Somra-MBL Limited declared autonomy, and became a member of GfK, the fourth largest global research giant, based in Germany. Somra-MBL Limited's position as member of GfK had opened a wide horizon for the company to grow even faster by acquiring the latest know-how and technology - aimed at serving our clients-partners much better than before, adding value to each and every element of our company's services. However, Somra-MBL Limited again pulled out of this arrangement in 2008, because GfK merged with TNS.

Somra-MBL Limited has been awarded the coveted status of “Company Partner” by the Market Research Society (MRS, UK), which represents researchers in more than 70 countries of the world. The Company Partner status is awarded to research companies with proven outstanding commitment to quality.



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Somra-MBL Limited, also as an accredited centre of the MRS, for professional qualifications, imparts training, and conducts advanced courses on Market and Social Research Practice to and for in-house personnel, as well as for people working in the business and social sectors.

The company has offices in all the major divisions of Bangladesh, covering the whole of the country (both urban and rural).

The head office is based in Dhaka, and is a fully equipped and owned by the company. The office, with over 20,000 square feet area, houses a total of 60 full-time researchers, field and DP officers, and administrative & support staff members, supported by state-of-the art IT and logistical technology for high quality and timely execution of more than one survey research project at a time. State-of the art project monitoring and reporting system – centrally as well as on spot High security and safety measures and equipment .

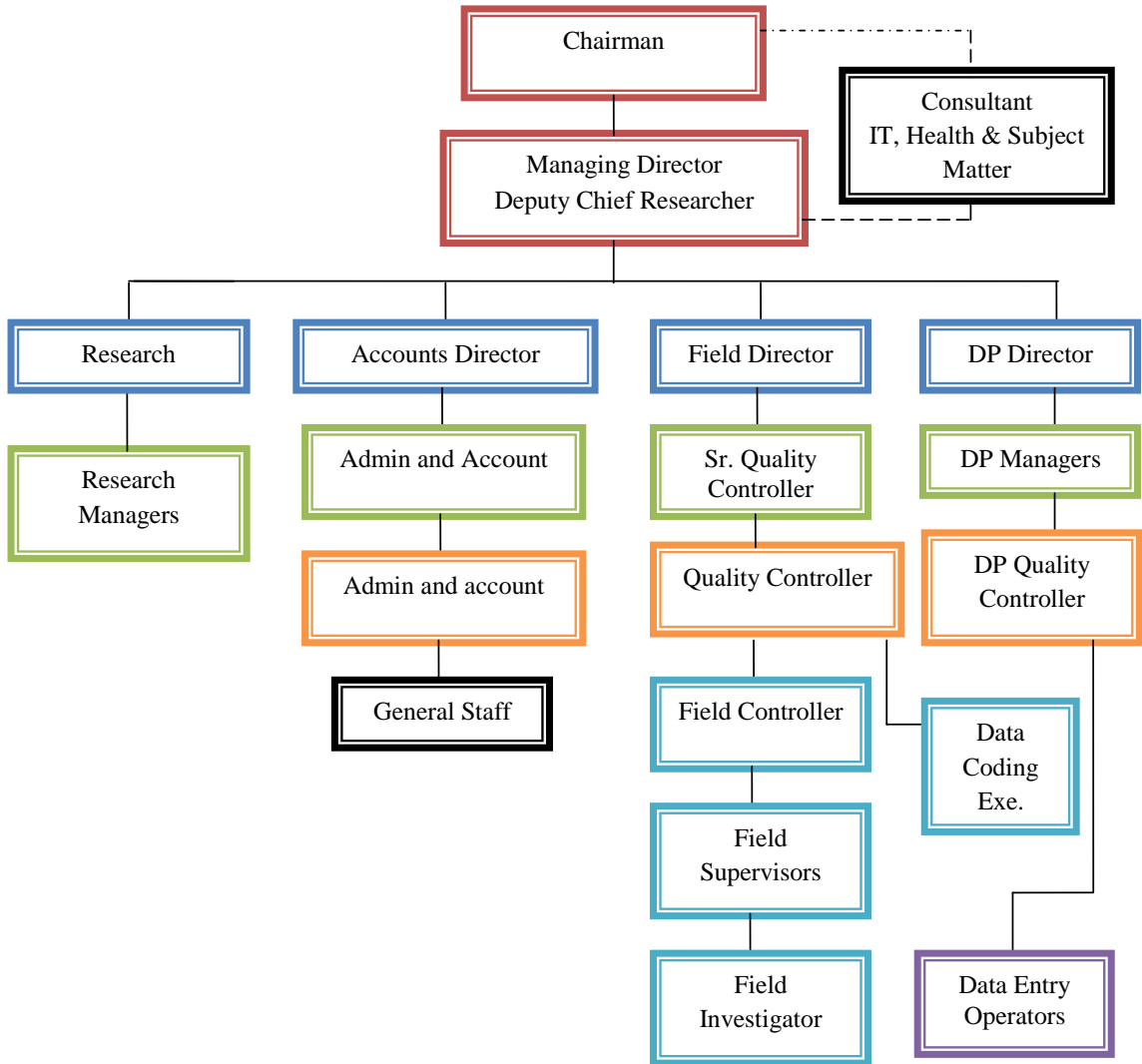
The field force comprises a panel of well-experienced part-time field and data processing personnel all over the country with members exceeding 700. The company also boasts a panel of senior research consultants (subject matter specialists) – international as well as local.

SOMRA-MBL Limited, as a full-time survey research company, conducts a wide range of survey research projects, employing almost all worldwide used techniques and methodologies. Till date, the company has successfully carried out around 2500 large, medium and small size projects - employing techniques which are purely quantitative, at the one extreme, and purely qualitative, at the other. For more information, visit our website: www.somra.net

The company has served a vast array of local and multinational/international commercial, non-commercial developmental organizations as well as UN organizations.

Areas of expertise:

- Consumer goods and services – foods and beverages
- Consumer goods and services – non-food items and durables
- Household Income and Expenditure Studies
- Retail Market Measurement
- Telecommunications
- Public Health, Nutrition, Family Planning
- Agriculture
- Education
- Banking and Finance
- Macro-Level Socio-Economic Studies
- Migration Issues
- Public policy issues
- Business to Business
- Information Technology (Database Management, Software Development)



Dr. Nasir Uddin Khan

Executive Chairman, Somra-MBL (Chief Researcher)

KEY PERSONNEL

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

Ph.D. (Economics), University of National & Global Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1985

Membership of Professional Bodies:

Full Member (with vocational title MMRS) of The Market Research Society (MRS, UK)

Member and **Country Representative, ESOMAR-World Research (www.esomar.org)**

Fellow & Senior Vice President, in charge of Development, Bangladesh Marketing & Social Research Society (www.bmsrs.org)



Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Dr. Khan has been doing market research since 1979 (1979-84 as part time international pricing researcher at Bulgarian Tobacco Company); May 1985-September 1988 market researcher at a Bangladesh-India joint venture company. He is the Founder and Chief researcher of Somra-MBL since October 1988. His competencies range from quantitative and qualitative techniques of survey research to all related statistical theories. He has designed, supervised, written reports and made presentations on over 1800 survey research projects. Being an expert in designing different probability and non-probability sampling techniques, and methods for minimizing sampling and non-sampling errors in survey, he has worked with renowned international researchers on diverse marketing and social research projects.

Dr. Khan is also the Marketing Director and ESPRI (International Technology Award Winning Software for Research Data Analysis) Trainer of Information Tools Limited (New Zealand) for South Asia (www.infotool.com).

Summary of teaching/training experience/subject specialism(s):

He has taught (as part-time teaching assistant) undergraduate students of Economics at the Higher Institute of Economics, Sofia, Bulgaria, during 1979-1985. In the workshop on Audience Research, jointly organized by BBC World Service, Unicef and Asian Media Information and Communication Centre held in Singapore, he acted as the Co-resource person to. Furthermore, he is the Head of Somra-MBL Professional Qualifications and annually conducts research learning workshops for multinational clients in Bangladesh.

Dr. Khan is also the author of a number of international peer read publications

Md. Monjur Iqbal

Managing Director, Somra-MBL Limited (Deputy Chief Researcher, Chief Project Coordinator)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

MBA, Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka, 1985

Membership of Professional Bodies:

Full Member (with vocational title MMRS) of The Market Research Society (MRS, UK)

Member, ESOMAR-World Research (www.esomar.org)



Fellow, Bangladesh Marketing & Social Research Society (BMSRS)

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mr. Iqbal is the Co-Founder and Deputy chief researcher of Somra-MBL limited. He is well-versed and experienced in both quantitative and qualitative research. Having managed, reported and presented (reports on) over 800 projects, he is extremely experienced in managing large scale quantitative surveys (sample sizes from 10,000 to as large as 500,000) – households and/or retail outlets across the country. His prime competency is having a diverse knowledge of all geographical locations/ stratifications of the country. With such a background. He is an expert in implementing methods for minimizing sampling and non-sampling errors in survey.

Mr. Iqbal is also the Managing Director and ESPRI (International Technology Award Winning Software for Research Data Analysis) Trainer of Information Tools Limited (New Zealand) for South Asia (www.infotool.com).

Other than being a tutor of Somra-MBL's programme "Building the future of market research in Bangladesh", he has regularly engages in training research buyers in Bangladesh. For the ESPRI users (clients), he conducts training sessions in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and the Middle-East at least twice a year.

Saiful Quadir

Data Processing (DP) Director, Somra-MBL Limited (Head of Data Processing Wing, Quantitative data analysis)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

MBA, Asian University of Bangladesh

M.Com, University of Dhaka

Membership of Professional Bodies: Please give name of body and level of membership:

1. American Marketing Association (AMA), Member
2. Bangladesh Software Society, Associate Member
3. MRA, Affiliate Member
4. Full Member, Bangladesh Marketing & Social Research Society (BMSRS)

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mr. Quadir has been working at Somra-MBL Limited since 1994. He began as a junior programmer, and quickly moved up the ranks to take charge of the DP Department. He is well versed in different forms of data entry, editing, and using different types of analysis software. Over the time he has become an expert in managing large amounts of data on a continuous basis. Besides that he has a good understanding of all aspects of survey research, and has field experience in addition.

He is also the Microsoft Partner Program Technical Resource Person.

Summary of teaching/training experience/subject specialism(s):

Mr. Quadir is a tutor of Somra-MBL's programme "Building the future of market research in Bangladesh", and he conducts regular in-house training (data processing) of part-time and full-time staff.

Nazmun Nahar Khan

Director (shareholder), Somra-MBL Limited (Qualitative Researcher & Quantitative Research Senior Quality Controller)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

MSS (Political Science), University of Dhaka

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

MSS (Political Science), University of Dhaka

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mrs. Khan has worked with different survey research agencies during 1983-1988 in the capacity of data collector, quality controller and qualitative researcher. Since 1988 she has worked for Somra-MBL Limited primarily for developing experienced data collectors and quality controllers. Moreover, after conducting several studies in the field of mother and child health and family planning, she is a specialist in that area.

Farhat Fatima

Director (shareholder), Somra-MBL Limited (Qualitative Researcher)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

Commerce Graduate

Associate Member of the Market Research Society, with vocational title AMRS

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mrs. Fatima participated in the training on Market Research, conducted by Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Since 1988, she has been working as: Senior FGD Moderator and In-Depth Interviewer. Her prime area of focus is FGD transcript "scanning", translation and reporting. She has conducted a number of qualitative studies for UN organizations and related NGOs.

Abdullah Al Mamun

General Manager, Research, Somra-MBL Limited (Team Leader, Mid-level Quantitative & Qualitative Researchers)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

MBA, East West University, Dhaka, 2001

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mr. Mamun has been working at Somra-MBL Limited since 2006. He began as a Senior Research Executive, passed all in-house training programme, and moved up the ranks to take charge of the Research Project Teams. He manages both household surveys, retail surveys and business to business surveys, having a good understanding of social aspects of survey research.

Holder of UK Level-5 certificate in “MRS Advanced Certificate in Market and Social Research Practice”.

As per the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

(http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_7134.aspx) Level 5 signifies:

“Competence which involves the application of skills and a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountabilities for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation”.

Member, ESOMAR-World Research (www.esomar.org)



Full Member, Bangladesh Marketing & Social Research Society (BMSRS)

Bazlur Rahman

General Manager (Field Wing), Somra-MBL Limited (Head of the Country-Wide Field Force)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

MSS (Economics)

Summary of industrial/commercial knowledge and/or experience (if applicable):

Mr. Rahman has been involved in survey research continuously since 1983, with personal experience of collecting data from different levels of the population as well as organizations. With over 28 years of work experience he has a very broad knowledge of the socio-geographical scenario of Bangladesh.

He has been working at Somra-MBL Limited since 1995. Joining as a data collector, he moved on to be a data collection team leader, trainer of data collectors, quality controller, field manager, and finally to the post of general manager.

He is very well experienced in field force training, questionnaire pre-testing, sampling plan implementation. With experience of both quantitative and qualitative research, he is very capable in managing a number of projects simultaneously – all over the country.

Mr. Rahman has been involved in total quality management, at field level of all projects of Somra-MBL Limited projects since the year 2000. His passion for quality control and various process reengineering makes him an ideal team leader for large scale projects.

Shahryar N. Khan

Researcher, Somra-MBL Limited (Innovations in Research Designing, Briefing of Relevant Personnel, Analysis and reporting of Quantitative & Qualitative studies)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

Masters (Development Studies), final semester, Independent University, Bangladesh
BA (Hons) Business Studies (University of Wales)

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mr. Khan has been working at Somra-MBL Limited since March 2009, after having completed his internship here. He contributes with innovative and energetic inputs to household, retail and business to business studies. With an almost completed Masters degree in a related subject, he has a good understanding of social aspects of survey research.

He also engages in “team-learning” while experimenting latest research techniques along with the group of young in-house researchers. With a very enthusiastic nature, he actively participates in various professional seminars on market and social research, both at home and abroad.

Holder of UK Level-5 certificate in “*MRS Advanced Certificate in Market and Social Research Practice*”.

Associate Member of the Market Research Society, by invitation, with vocational title AMRS

“Young Professional Member”, ESOMAR-World Research (www.esomar.org)
Associate Member, Bangladesh Marketing & Social Research Society (BMSRS)

Akhtar Ahad Khan

Full Time Research Consultant (Full Time Consultant, IT infrastructure of Somra-MBL Limited and Chief Scientific Officer and Software Architect of Intellizer, a subsidiary of Somra-MBL Limited)

Academic & Professional Qualifications:

M.Sc. (Applied Physics & Electronics)

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Mr. A. A. Khan has worked as Senior Scientific Officer (Electronics Department) of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission from 1980-1990; and ever since 1990 he has been with Somra-MBL Limited. Initially he joined as a part-time software developer, but now he is a full time consultant of Somra-MBL Limited. He has participated in a number of ICT conferences abroad as technical resource person. He is the architect of Somra-MBL Limited's hardware and software infrastructure, having developed a number of PC and PPC software - which have won acclaim at home and abroad and also recognition from Microsoft Corporation.

Dr. Saiful Islam

Full Time Research Consultant (Public Health Sector), and physician at Somra-MBL Limited (Quantitative and Qualitative Research Consulting related to Public Health, Interviewing of public health beneficiaries as well as delivery persons.)

MBBS, Medical Academy, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1983

DTM&H, London, 1985

Summary of research knowledge and/or experience:

Dr. Islam has worked as field physician at the Iranian Oil Company during the Iran-Iraq war. Since 1999 has been a private practitioner and attached to Somra-MBL Limited as public health consultant. He has worked on numerous relevant projects commissioned by developmental and UN organizations.

Note: More details on the above key personnel as well as all other full time and over 700 part time long experienced staff of SOMRA-MBL Limited are provided only on request from clients/sponsors.

We have panels of consultants – very senior academicians, researchers and experts from the following fields:

- Agriculture;
- Education;
- ICT;
- Macro Economics;
- Mass Communication;
- Pharmaceuticals;
- Policy and Governance;
- Public Health.

The consultants are engaged contractually, as and when required. Whenever one or more consultants are required (after a project has been won by Somra-MBL Limited), contracts are signed with them, and written consent to work for a given project, with details of input and other terms and conditions, are taken, a copy of which is given to client(s) for record.

As far as our clients are concerned, irrespective of Regular or Ad-hoc, we firmly believe that: **“Once a Client, Forever a partner”**, and therefore are always available during and after a project – with value addition and client satisfaction in mind.

Our Quality Policy

To Achieve and Maintain Global Standards of Quality in Marketing & Social Survey Research. We strictly adhere to all sections and clauses of the MRS and ICC/ESOMAR Codes of Conduct



Our 20,000 square feet Headquarter boasts state-of-the-art intranet facilities with ERP solutions. It accommodates over 60 full-time and 200 part time Somra personnel in Dhaka.



The entire facility shares high-speed data connectivity not only to speed up work processes, but also to help clients stay connected to our “cloud” computing options



Regular brain storming sessions with senior researchers help sharing knowledge, enhancing creativity and staying motivated.



Centralised field briefing ensures strict adherence to quality, helps eliminate miscommunications in the process.



Full time quality control officers guide entry personnel throughout their work. Plus, customised data entry platforms help serve clients the way they wish to receive data.



Audio-Visual recordings facilitate proper interpretation of responses during Focused Group Discussions, and also remote monitoring / moderating without creating a Hawthorne effect.



Cooperative post coding and data checks enhance the quality of outputs, maintaining an energetic work environment.



Support staff at the Accounts Department ensure proper tracking and storage of necessary documents.

We are always available to our clients, because we firmly believe in:

“Once a client, partner forever . . .”

www.somra.net

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