

- 58 mother and guardian meetings held.
- 2 important days (National Mourning Day and International Women's Day) have been observed.
- 1 adolescent boys and girls conference organized.
- 1140 trees have been planted at club and home premises by 19 clubs.
- 29 clubs received books and other materials.

CASE STUDY

Kalpana can now think positively about her future

Kalpana Rani (14) was born in the village of Bashmalipara at the Gareya union under the district of Thakurgaon. Her father's name is Achuri Barman and the name of her mother is Kiran Bala. Kalpana now reads in class eight. Her only dream in life is to grow up as an honourable person in the society. A few months ago, two field workers from ESDO, Shefali and Alamgir, met with Kalpana and enlisted her name in a survey. Later, Kalpana came to know that she has been made a member of the Gareya union branch of the Adolescent Boys' and Girls' Club project. A trainer madam started visiting their school twice a week. She helped them learn new games and songs. She also discussed many important issues with them like the importance of education, the evils of child marriage and various aspects of adolescence. The knowledge and understanding gained from these sessions made them determined that they will never encourage any evil practice and would try their best to prevent these. But a terrible thing happened in Kalpana's life. One day she came back from school and was informed by her mother that, they have decided to give her marriage. The news came as a complete shock for Kalpana who hated child marriage from the core of her heart. In spite of her strong protest, her parents were adamant to give her in marriage. Helpless and utterly distressed, Kalpana informed the trainer madam and other club members about the incident. They all decided to inform the local UP chairman about the matter and seek his help. The UP chairman advised them to go to Kalpana's parents and urge them to stop the marriage.

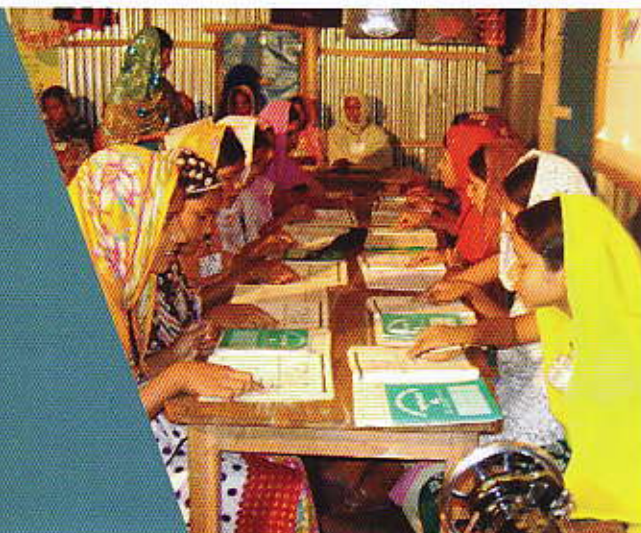
Accordingly, the trainer and 30 club members went to Kalpana's parents and, after informing them about the perils of early marriage, requested them not to proceed with the marriage. They also informed Kalpana's parents that child marriage is strongly prohibited by law and since the local community as well as government officials are with them, they will not allow this marriage to happen. At last, Kalpana's parents realized their mistake and canceled the marriage. The club members were jubilant. They were so happy that they started dancing around Kalpana. This brought tears of joy in Kalpana's eyes. She thanked everybody to come to her rescue. Now Kalpana is getting herself prepared for the upcoming JSC examination. She is determined to secure a good result. She is confident that, if she can study attentively, she will be able to fulfill all the dreams of her life.

Post Literacy and Continuing Education for Human Development PLCEHD-2 Project

(1st Phase-4th Cycle)

Project duration: May 2010 – April 2011

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



The Government of Bangladesh as well as the development partners has been carrying out literacy programs for benefiting millions of learners across the country. However, the neo-literates require further training to reinforce their new skills and to acquire new sets of life skills aimed at enhancing their employment opportunity and breaking the cycle of poverty. Appropriate curricula and trained facilitators are also required to train them. To fulfill these requirements, the Government of Bangladesh has undertaken the Post Literacy and Continuing Education for Human Development project. However, although the project started in 2002 and scheduled to be implemented during July 2002-June 2007 period, it soon became non-operational and remained so for nearly three years. The project operation resumed in June 2006 and is scheduled to be completed in June 2013. Under this program, after successfully completing the first, second and third cycle, ESDO has started implementing the fourth cycle from May 2011.

Objectives

The project's long-term sectoral objective is to reduce rural poverty through investments in human development and is aimed at empowering the rural poor by providing them with literacy, life skills, and income-generating skills. The project aims to establish a community-based and need-oriented Post Literacy and Continuing Education for Human development project-2 (PLCEHD-2 course program and a supporting organizational framework for 1.6 million neo-literates in 29 districts.

The specific objectives are

- To develop human resources of the country;
- To include about 1.6 million neo-literates in post literacy programmes to consolidate, maintain and upgrade the literacy skills they have acquired previously;
- To help develop their life pattern by increasing their incomes through providing technical skills training;
- To eliminate gender disparity and establish social equitability through expediting women empowerment;

- To involve the target population in a life-long educational process to develop them as enlightened and productive citizen;
- To prepare a long-term planning for human resource development; and
- To strengthen the capacity of agencies involved in Non-Formal Education.

Project highlights

- 72 days of post literacy course conducted of all 170 continuing education centers
- Training need assessment of 340 batches of trainees conducted.
- 120 days of skill training on different kinds of IGAs including screen, block, tailoring, livestock, electronic apparatus repairing, electric wearing, fish culture, nursery and vegetable gardening, etc.
- Quarterly learners' evaluation tests conducted three times.
- 20 social mobilization rallies and discussion meetings held.
- 170 FDRs (each amounting to 5,000 Taka) for each center as center sustainability cost were created.
- 1 International Literacy Day and 04 different national days were observed.
- 170 color televisions were distributed among various centers.
- A local resource pool was established.
- Out of 10200 learners' 5218 learners already start their IGA activities.

CASE STUDY

Taufiqul days of misery are over

Taufiqul (26) is the oldest son of a day laborer. His family consists of 12 members, who live in the village of Mohonpur at Nachole union in Nachole upazila under the district of Chapai Nawabganj. Taufiqul has been married for eight years and has two sons. Taufiqul and his father both worked as day laborer, but his father had to quit because of old age. Now Taufiqul is the sole bread-winner for the family and he finds it a nearly impossible task to support the big family with his own meager income.

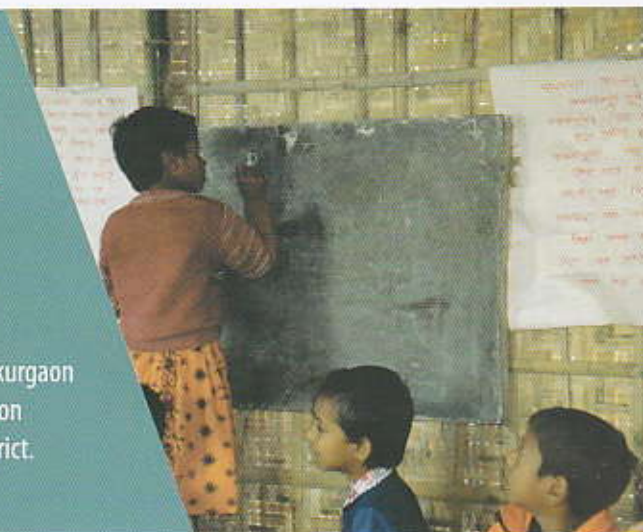
Fortunately, Taufiqul was enlisted by ESDO survey team in the PLCEHD-2 primary list. Taufiqul was admitted in Jaba Eco Learning Center (Code 30) under the PLCEHD-2 project and continued the PL&CE course for nine months. He attended the CEC regularly and learnt his lessons. He also attended the 120-day long continuing education (IGA) training course on shallow machine repairing in the night session. After completing the course, Taufiqul attended a linkage session organized by ESDO with the local microfinance support organization to ensure financial support. Under this program, Taufiqul received a loan of 3,000 Taka from BRAC and bought a shallow machine tool box. Then he started repairing faulty shallow machines and earned around 100-150 Taka per day. Soon, his reputation as a shallow machine mechanic spread and he set up a workshop in the nearby haat. Now he earns around 300 Taka per day and is planning to expand the shop by recruiting two assistants. Taufiqul can now support his family more satisfactorily and dreams of a brighter future for his sons and other family members. He is thankful to the PLCEHD-2 project as well as to ESDO for extending a helping hand to him in his times of distress.

Promotion of Rights for Advasi and Dalit Improvement Programme (PRADIP)

Project duration: January 2008 – December 2012

Project location: 13 unions including 1 municipality in Thakurgaon sadar upazila and 9 unions in Pirganj upazila under Thakurgaon district and 1 union in Bochaganj upazila under Dinajpur district.

Donor agency: Heks, Switzerland.



In countries like Bangladesh, poor and extreme poor people have long been suffering from an extremely limited access to basic amenities. Their fundamental human rights are often violated and they are subjected to different kinds of discriminations and oppressions. Among these people, the status of ethnic minority groups, especially dalits and adivasi (indigenous) people is particularly distressful. With an aim to bring meaningful and sustainable changes to the lives of these people, ESDO has been implementing the Promotion of Rights for Adibashi and Dalit Improvement Programme (PRADIP) project in selected areas of Thakurgaon and Dinajpur districts. By addressing the core causes of the violation of human rights and empowering the vulnerable people to protect their human rights on a sustainable basis, the project has succeeded in creating a favourable atmosphere in the project areas where the vulnerable ethnic minority groups can hope to lead a happy and prosperous life free from all kinds of discriminations.



Goals

- Improved human rights of 58 dalits and 941 adivasis (total 999) and improvement of economic status of 225 vulnerable households through advocacy, skill training and support service by December 2008.
- 75% reduction of violation of human rights and improved socio-economic status of 58 dalits and 941 adivasis by 2012.
- The targeted extreme minority people are empowered to sustain the program activities by themselves.

Objective

- Extreme minority families, especially women members (adivasi or indigenous) people, dalits within Thakurgaon district will be informed about their human rights, laws and entitlements.
- 999 household will be capable of affording support services from government health complex, Department of Agriculture, Livestocks, Fisheries and Social Welfare, Public health, NGO services and extreme minority communities will receive enhanced services.
- At least 999 families will improve their economic status through capacity building and undertaking of income generation activities (IGA).
- At least 284 Adolescents will receive vocational training and will be engaged in non-hazardous works.
- 1 (one) Community Based Organization (CBO) will be established to continue the project activities.

Project highlights

- Extensive community mobilization and linkage was made between service providers and the beneficiaries.
- Greater support and ownership has been mobilized through regular meetings with human rights protection committees at union and upazilla levels.
- IGA capacity development training were provided on beef fattening, poultry rearing, pig and goat rearing, nursery development and block boutique to 294 persons.
- 4 workshops on marketing promotion linkage were organized.
- Educational and recreational materials have been distributed among the targeted beneficiaries.
- 86 students were mainstreamed to government primary schools.
- 4 health camps with free medicines were organized.
- 39 health and nutrition sessions were organized and 217 school learners participated in health hygiene practice sessions.
- 56 people received legal aid supports.
- 780 persons were provided linkage with microfinance agencies.

Haren thanks PRODIP for enlightening his life

Haren Hrisi hails from an ultra poor Santal family at the village of Krishnapur in Thakurgaon Sadar upazilla under the district of Thakurgaon. His father is Nabanu Hrisi and mother Rasmoni Hrisi. Haren has five brothers and sisters. Because of his father's extreme poverty, Haren and his family members had to struggle hard to fulfill even the most fundamental needs like food and clothing. Like his siblings, he could not afford to go to school. Life became so miserable that, whenever thought about future, his mind filled with great distress because he could see even the faintest ray of hope.

One day, a field-level staff of ESDO's PRODIP project came to Haren's home and informed him that, with support from Heks, Switzerland, ESDO will provide vocational training to adivasis like him so that they could find employment and break away from the cycle of poverty and hunger. Haren felt very enthusiastic. He received 40-days training on shallow machine repairing. Upon completion of the training, he started repairing shallow machines by visiting different households. Soon, his reputation as a good mechanic spread over communities and he set up a small workshop near his home. In the beginning, his daily income was 70-80 Taka, but now he earns around 200 Taka a day. The income grows substantially during the harvesting season comes. Haren feels that his days of misery are over. He helps his parents and family members to the best of his ability. He is now known in the community as a master-mechanic. He hopes to expand his workshop and make it as one of the largest in the area. He also responds to calls from distant places. Haren is thankful to PRODIP for giving him the self-belief and skills he needed so badly for making a positive change in his life.





Sustainable Education through Community Participation (SECP)

Project duration: July 2012 – June 2015

Project location: Hatibandha upazilla under Lalmonirhat district.

Donor agency: Heks, Switzerland.



Although education is considered as the most vital ingredient of development, a large portion of the children of Bangladesh are deprived of education. Lack of access to education and absence of educational facilities in the rural and far-flung areas have created a huge vacuum in the educational infrastructure, causing millions of underprivileged children to remain uneducated. In view of this, ESDO has undertaken the Sustainable Education through Community Participation (SECP) project to bring about qualitative development in the education sector through capacity building, organizational development and creation of educational opportunities for underprivileged children in the rural areas. By taking a comprehensive approach, the project has succeeded in creating scopes and opportunities for the disadvantaged children in Hatibandha, Lalmonirhat to avail themselves of educational facilities.

Objectives: (Financial Year 2012-Financial Year 2015)

- To develop and strengthen capacity of local level duty bearers for creating access of 3 to 5 years old children to home based early learning (SBK) and pre-school.
- To increase skills of community human resources & school teacher for ensuring quality primary education including SBK & preschool.
- To create pre-school opportunity for all 5-6 years age group children with the collaboration of local education department & LGIs.
- To strengthen capacity of relevant stakeholder and education department to implement School Improvement Plan (SIP) aligning with Government primary education at 30 primary school (GPS, RNGPS, NRGPS) for ensuring interactive teaching-learning process in the classroom.
- To build awareness of community local level duty bearers for creating fear-free learning environment in project area.

Project highlights

- Capacity development of community teachers and facilitators completed.
- 12 vision building workshops conducted.
- CMC orientation of 313 committees and SMC training of 29 committees conducted.
- Parents' contribution amounting to Taka 71,986 (SBK) and Taka 74,380 (pre-school) collected.
- Parents meetings comprising 2200 persons (SBK) and 350 persons (pre-school) conducted.
- 65 UP education standing committee meetings conducted.
- Education campaigns for 6+ children in 6 unions organized.

CASE STUDY

Rabeya can now realize her childhood dreams

Rabeya Khatun was born in an ultra poor family in the village of Gotamari in Haribandha Upazila under the district of Lalmonirhat. Her family migrated to Dhaka in search of work and her parents worked in a garment factory for some time. However, being unable to cope with the harsh realities of a mega city like Dhaka, they came back home in 2011. Rabeya was enrolled in South Gotamari Registered Non-Government Preschool. However, after staying in their village home for only six months, Rabeya's parents again decided to go to Dhaka in search of employment. Rabeya was crestfallen, because migration to Dhaka for the second time would mean her education to come to an abrupt end.

Around that time, South Gotamari RNGPS preschool committee and SMC organized a progress assessment exercise of the students. Under this exercise, the performances of all students were analyzed jointly by the parents and school authority. For this, some individual and group competitions were organized. Upon completion of the competition, three of the best performers were awarded. Rabeya's mother was present at the event and was greatly impressed by her daughter's performance and changed her decision to migrate to Dhaka for the sake of Rabeya's education. However, there was one problem. Rabeya's father was adamant to go to Dhaka. Rabeya's tried hard to convince her husband to allow herself and Rabeya to stay back at home in their village. At last, Rabeya's father agreed. Now Rabeya's parents are very much pleased that they took the decision, because Rabeya has continued her good performance at the school. Pleased with Rabeya's performance, one of her teachers gave her an Eid bonus of Taka 100 before the last Eid. Rabeya's mother Julekha Begum has vowed to continue Rabeya's education under any circumstances. She said, 'Now that my daughter is showing a lot of promises, I will do everything in my ability to continue her education. I thank the school committee and the ESDO staff members for arranging events which encourage meritorious students to achieve excellence in education.'

Women and Their Children's Health (WATCH)

Development Partner: World Food Programme (WFP)

Project Area: Hatibandha Upazila under Lalmonirhat district

Project Period: January 2012 to April 2015



With the ever-increasing occurrences of women and child rights violation in its many forms and manifestations, the condition of women and children, especially among the disadvantaged communities, remain vulnerable. Consequently, their health status also remains quite poor. With an aim to improve the health status of women and children from the vulnerable communities with a combination of direct support, awareness raising, capacity building and advocacy, the 'Women and Their Children's Health' (WATCH) project was undertaken with the assistance of World Food Programme (WFP). Starting in early 2012 and scheduled to be continued up to the mid-2015, this project has succeeded in bringing qualitative changes in the health status of vulnerable women and children in the project area.

Project highlights

- 72 CSG committees were formed.
- 72 quarterly meetings with CSG committees were conducted.
- 6 monthly meetings/coordination meetings with Health and Family Planning standing committee were conducted.
- 11 orientation sessions of CSG, CCMG & UHC members on referral system were organized.
- 1 'Safe Motherhood Day' and 1 'International Women's Day' were observed.
- 32 mobile phone sets were distributed for Health and Family Welfare Center & Community Clinic organizing effective referral service.
- 4 monthly staff coordination meetings were organized.



School Feeding Programme in Poverty Prone Areas

Development partner: Directorate of Primary Education (DPE).

Project area: Kownia and Badargonj Upazila of Rangpur district, Tungipara and Kotali para upazila of Gopalganj district, Mehandigonj and Bakargonj of Barishal district.

Project period: August 2011 to December 2014



Government of Bangladesh has launched the School Feeding Program (SFP) in Poverty Prone Areas of Bangladesh with the aim of reducing hunger in the classroom as well as to promote school enrollment and attendance rates. In accordance with an agreement signed between ESDO and the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), ESDO has been implementing School Feeding Programme in Poverty Prone Areas for school going children as a Partner NGO of DPE and with technical support from WFP. The SFP Programme is especially designed to increase enrolment, daily attendance rate and reduction of dropout rate in schools and aims to spread education through the daily distribution of a packet of 75gm High Energy Biscuit (HEB) which reduce the short time hunger as well as improve nutritional status of school going children in 1201 schools in three districts.

Objectives

- To increase the enrollment rate in schools.
- To increase the attendance rate in schools.
- To reduce the dropout rate from the schools.
- To reduce the short time hunger in the schools and increase the attentiveness.
- To remove the micro-nutrients deficiencies.

Specific activities

- Distribution of 75 gm HEB consisting of nutrients, vitamins and minerals based on the daily attendance. The biscuit contains vitamins, iron, zinc, iodine and others micro nutrients.
- Essentials service package- community mobilization, health, nutrients, sanitation, deworming, etc and increasing the involvement of women in the school management committee.
- Vegetable gardening in the school premises.

Project highlights

- Each of the 285,145 students in 1201 government schools and madrashas received 75gms HEB daily.
- Field Monitors visited schools and madrashas regularly and held discussions with students, teachers and SMC members to ensure smooth and effective completion of program activities. They checked the attendance cards with the attendance registers, stock registers with the physical stock of HEB, storage condition of HEB, hygiene environment of schools, cleanliness of students, case studies on drop out, condition of safe drinking water, condition of sanitary latrine, etc. and filled up the monitoring check list as required by the WFP.



School Feeding Programme under Country Programme

Development partner: World Food Programme (WFP)

Project Area: 25 Administrative Thanas under 7 Education Thanas (Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, Tejgaon, Gulshan, Motijheel and Demra) in Dhaka City.

Project Period: March 2009 to December 2012.



One of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, Bangladesh is regularly affected by natural disasters like flood, cyclone, river bank erosion, heavy rainfall, etc. As a result, people, especially poor people, are in vulnerable state all the year round. Unable to find employment or ensure food security in their disaster-prone villages and towns, a large number of people regularly migrate to big cities, including Dhaka. Forced to live in squalid condition in slums, they try their best to make a decent living, but fails to do so because of extreme poverty. Many parents send their children to schools, but, as field findings show, about 50% children are attending school without having breakfast as they come from the ultra poor segment. In order to address this predicament, ESDO undertook School Feeding Programme with WFP assisted Country Program with an overall goal to complement the Government of Bangladesh safety net programmes to alleviate the impact of high food prices particularly through school feeding. The School Feeding Programme are designed in respect of increasing enrollment, daily attendance in the school and gradually improvement of class results, reducing dropout rate through the daily distribution of a packet of 75 gm HEB which reduce the short time hunger as well as improving the status of nutrition of school going students in 114 Government Primary Schools and 184 NGO learning Centers of 7 Thanas of Dhaka city.

Goals

To complement the Government of Bangladesh safety net programmes to alleviate the impact of high food prices particularly through school feeding.

Objectives

- To Increase student enrollment in schools.
- To increase attendance rate.
- To reduce dropout rate.
- To reduce hunger in class room.
- To crate attentiveness to lessons through reducing hunger in class room.

Project highlights

- In order to enhance the skill and capacity of the project staff, 5-days long refresher orientation training was organized, which was participated by head teachers, DPEOs, TEOs, area managers of various NGOs and ESDO project staff.
- One year after the implementation of the project, the number of enrolled students stood at 83,777, an increase of 6.5% enrolment as compared to the previous year. In 2012, the enrolment increased by another 6.5%, owing to the activities of the project.
- Each of the 81,300 students from 114 Government schools and 6,578 students from 184 NGO-run schools received a packet of 75gm HEB daily. During the reporting period, 1009.153 mt HEB have been distributed among the students.
- During the reporting period, 7 field monitors made visits to 114 government and 184 NGO schools and monitored the project activities by holding discussions with students, teachers, and SMC members.
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) donated 84 cartoons of sports goods through World Food Programme, Dhaka. Some other non-food items like poster, pencil, eraser, cutter, etc were distributed among the CLC participants.
- ESDO conducted 84 Inter-Educate Magic Shows at government primary schools Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Demra, Gulshan, Mirpur and Motijeel thanas. The magic shows were conducted by prominent magician Mr. Ulfat Kabir and his team. Students received knowledge and inspiration about the importance of education, health, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene etc. through the magic shows.
- 21 workshops on key issues like community mobilization and advocacy, leadership skills of female SMC members, vegetable gardening in school yard etc. were organized in 7 Upazilas for head teachers, assistant head teachers, SMC member and parents-students representatives.

Dreams of Sumaiya and her mother come true

Sumaiya Akhter, aged 7, hails from a poor family in the village of Atharobari in Kishoregonj. Her father Ali Akbor Mia could not feed his children with his small income, that's why Sumaiya's mother Komola Begum migrated to Dhaka with Sumaiya and her other child in search of work. They took shelter in the sprawling Lalkuthi slum at Mirpur. She started working as housemaid. Burdened with supporting her two children with her meager income, Komola Begum could not manage to send Sumaiya to school in spite of her ardent desire. Although primary education in the country is free and compulsory, many parents cannot afford to send their children to schools due to financial and social factors. The same fate befell Sumaiya, because there was no educational opportunity for the children of the slum where they live. Life was indeed miserable. The house rent and the rising prices of food made it very difficult for Komola Begum to feed her two children properly. But in spite of all her sufferings, the mother's dream of sending her child to school remained alive. Then she heard about the Surovi Learning Centre from one neighbor and she contacted the school authorities. Accordingly, Sumaiya was selected as a beneficiary of the Surovi Learning Centre of WFP's School Feeding programme. She started going to school and soon grew very fond of the school. Each day she receives a packet of nutritious biscuit for attending the school. Sumaiya is very attentive in her study. After completion of her study, Sumaiya wants to be a teacher and teach disadvantaged children. She and her mother are grateful to Surovi Learning Centre. 'I hope this centre will continue its activities so that more girls and boys like me can be benefited from its programs,' Sumaiya says.





Strengthen Movement to Advance Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Development partner: Steps Towards Development (STD)

Project area: Baliadangi upazila under Thakurgaon district

Project period: February 2004 to till now



Women of Bangladesh are subjected to various kinds of discrimination in every sphere of life. The social, economic, political and other rights of women are violated routinely and a large portion of these violations go unnoticed and unpunished. ESDO has undertaken the 'Strengthen Movement to Advance Women's Rights and Gender Equality' project in collaboration with Steps Towards Development (STD) to ensure equal rights, opportunities and benefits of women, especially women coming from vulnerable communities. Now in its 9th year, the project has brought about significant improvements in the condition of women in the project areas and has inspired women and women-focused organizations working in other areas to replicate the success of this project.

Program Themes

Gender equality to ensure equal rights, opportunities and benefits of men and women.

- a) Gender responsive planning and budgeting
- b) Gender responsive instructions and laws
- c) Gender responsive media.

Women's Human Rights to Ensure Justice, respect and enjoyment of equal rights

- a) Violence Against Women including Domestic Violence
- b) Sexuality and sexual harassment
- c) Early marriage

Women's political participation to eliminate/ reduce discrimination and patriarchy

- a) Women representation: in local government and political process
- b) Gender responsive governance

Project highlights

- 38 meetings with Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Committee (NNPC), Local Government, Village Police, Sufia Kamal Fellows and gender responsive team were held.
- 34 view exchange meetings with local service providers, SMCs, Teachers, Guardians, SKFs, GCAs, legal aid committee members and stakeholders were held.
- 18 campaigns and cultural shows were arranged.
- 16 Caravan Campaigns against sexual harassment were organized.
- 4 complain boxes and information boards were provided at school level.



Eco Pathsala and Eco College



ESDO firmly believes that Bangladesh will face serious challenge to go ahead in this competitive world. Therefore, if we cannot give our children proper education and linking with the information technology of the 21st century, we would not be able to face the challenges of the new millennium. In view of this, ESDO founded the Eco Pathsala in the year 2002 at Thakurgaon town with a total of only 27 students. Main aim of the Eco Pathsala is to raise the benchmarks for education and deliver value to the entire learning community. Eco-Pathsala has expanded its branches in three other places- Shibganj, Ruhia and Pirganj. In 2011-12, these four branches of the Patshala were running with a total of 1,677 students and 76 teachers.

We recognize the challenges of an inter-dependent and competitive world and the need for our children to adapt and excel in it. We believe in an education system that stimulates children to use their multiple faculties and think in connected ways, and can better prepare them for success. To that end, Eco-Pathsala has developed a highly experiential and contextual curriculum based on interdisciplinary teaching methods. Our motivated faculty interprets this dynamic learning model using the appropriate tools, apparatus and facilities available in the school. By adopting a creative and collaborative approach to learning, we provide children with opportunities to realize their full potential and excel anywhere.

Eco College

Eco College was established in 2011 with the continuation of promotion of quality education commitment of ESDO.

Goal

Develop ideal citizen for the country through providing appropriate education suiting to the needs of the 21st century that ensures full blossom of the knowledge and skill of the students.

To introduce a modern education process that ensures training, appropriate and pragmatic strategy to gain knowledge and a unique examination system to educate the student for their physical and mental development.

Characteristics

Eco Pathsala and Eco College is dedicated to achieving a broader goal of Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh. It provides the students with scopes to grow as complete human beings, not only the opportunity to read and write. This means, it is a unique institution which provides a student to develop physically, mentally, intellectually, ethically and to learn about social, cultural and religious norms and values. ESDO believes in dynamism and continuous learning to improve the quality and is open to learn from all over the world in order to improve the quality of learning in Eco Pathsala and Eco College. According to Tagore, "only the ideal education can create pride and commitments in the mind of human being. Ideal education does not make people overwhelmed full blossom of the dormant strengths and potentials exist in every human being". In fact, the philosophy of Eco Pathsala and Eco College is established based on the philosophy of Tagore. ESDO is committed that the Eco Pathsala and Eco College, the labour-room for making enlightened human beings will gradually be transformed into a University over time.



ESDO Popular Theater



ESDO Popular Theater Team consists of 12 members (in combination of folk singers, drama performers, and musicians) and 1 well equipped (musical Instruments, generator, mobile stage, sound system etc.) covered mobile pick-up van has been successfully performing in ESDO's working area. UNDP and ILO have already provided funding support for ESDO Popular Theater.

Objectives of ESDO Popular Theatre

- Enhancing access to information and awareness of grassroots communities on various socio-economic issues, rights, resources and services through infotainment
- Promoting the voices of the poor and disadvantaged, especially women
- Promoting community participation in local development and developing popular theatre performers as grassroots human rights activists
- Exploring indigenous folk culture, traditions, and creative arts and utilizing them for the development of rural communities

Impact of Popular Theatre

Popular Theatre is collectivizing and transforming rural communities and unite them to address social injustice and exploitation. Popular Theatre also promotes women's empowerment. Women are being exposed to new information and ideas through plays, which they did not have access to before. Watching shows as a community is increasing their mobility in society, allows for gender-mixing, and provides a platform for contributory discussions. Women develop a higher confidence level as their voices and opinions are heard in the participatory discussions after the play. Simply watching a play becomes a vital form of communication since it creates sustainable and gradual shifts in perceptions without directly threatening local culture and traditions.

Lokayan Livelihood Museum



Lokayan Livelihood Museum is the grassroots voice initiative on the context of climate change adaptation and peoples centered disaster management. The primary objective of establishing 'Lokayan' is to preserve and restore the traditions, cultures and experience of coping strategies on climate change adaptation and disaster management. Through this initiative employment opportunity has also been created for a good number of poor and marginal people, particularly women and indigenous communities.

Generally, the word 'museum' is used for places where historical artifacts are preserved, which give some idea about the lifestyle of the people of certain time period (maybe of a ruling period of a famous emperor or king) but not a complete idea of the livelihoods of the people (general mass) for that particular period. The northern part of Bangladesh inherits a huge wealth of folk traditions that reflect the lifestyles of people with various professions, ethnic groups, indigenous communities, people with various religious, caste, race, etc. 'Lokayan' has been established by ESDO with the noble intention to go a bit beyond the limitations of the traditional museums. By filling in the gaps of these traditional museums, 'Lokayan' intends to capture a complete picture of the livelihoods of all categories of people living in the northern part of Bangladesh for hundreds of years. Although the initiative started earlier, 'Lokayan' was officially launched in April 2008. 'Lokayan' is a Bengali word created by the innovators of this initiative, with an intention to mean something more than a museum that preserves and restores the folk traditions and cultures of all cross-sections of people of a particular human habitation during a particular period of time, focusing largely the rural setup. It is located within the campus of the eco-farm in the Thakurgaon town. 'Lokayan' has already accumulated a good collection of various folk traditions of the northern Bangladesh.

While the primary objective of establishing 'Lokayan' is to preserve and restore the traditions and cultures of the northern Bangladesh, it is expected that the initiative will create employment opportunity for a good number of poor and marginal people, particularly the women and indigenous communities. As of now a shed for Lokayan, two thresh-roof houses, a open platform/stage, a road, a six-corner tin roof house and a house of village leader (Morol) have been constructed and a total of 3000 traditional tool and materials of different types have been collected and preserved. More than a thousand of timber trees, fruit trees, ornamental trees and medicinal plants have been collected and planted in the garden.



Health And Nutrition

Community Managed Health Care (CMHC) Project

Project duration: 2011 to till now

Project location: Lalmonirhat Sadar, Aditmari, Kaliganj and Patgram upazilas of Lalmonirhat district



Bangladesh has made considerable progresses during the last two decades in health, education and economic indicators. But roughly 33% of the population is estimated to subsist on 1 USD per day. The maternal mortality is 194 per 100,000 live births and infant mortality rate (IMR) is estimated as 43 per 1000 live births. Nearly half of the pregnant women suffer from malnutrition and anemia that contributes to low-birth-weight babies and neonatal mortality. 30% married women are undernourished. About 43% of children under five are short for their age (stunted), and 17% are underweight for their height (wasted). The fertility rate has decreased to 2.7, which is a good sign, but more than 85% of births occur at home, and three-fourth of births are handled by traditional birth attendants, with a mere 12% of them being properly trained. To make sustainable improvement, health and family planning services are needed to be brought to the doorstep of underprivileged rural people. This can be done through massive proliferation and promotion of Community Clinics (CC). ESDO has been making this happen through the CMHC project. The areas covered by the project are prone to monga and a high level of poverty. Since December 2011, ESDO, in collaboration with Plan Bangladesh, has been carrying out the project in 144 government-run community clinics in the project areas. Hatibandha, another upazila of Lalmonirhat district also is being covered by the project through coordination with the WATCH project. The main focus of the project is comprehensive development of health, nutrition and family planning status by ensuring smooth functioning of the Community Clinic Management Groups.



General objective of the project

The project aims to contribute in achieving MDG 4 and 5 especially for the disadvantaged poor, under 5 children and women through establishing community managed health care system by strengthening the 144 CCMGs in 5 upazilas of Lalmonirhat district and functioning of 24 Community Clinics (CCs), 8 UH& FWCs and Health Advisory Committees.

Specific objectives of the project

- To improve access to quality primary health care services through functioning community clinic, UH& FWCs and Upazila health complex and strengthening referral linkage between community to CC to UH&FWC to UHC.
- To improve exclusive breast feeding among 0-6 month children through behavior change communication and mother support group in 5 unions of Hatibandha Upazila by 2015.
- To increase number of functional CCMGs through formation/ reformation, training and advocacy with community, local government and local health department in Lalmonirhat district by 2015
- To increase number of functional CCMGs through formation/ reformation, training and advocacy with community, local government and local health department in Lalmonirhat district.

Project highlights

- In cooperation with the UPs, 120 community mobilizers have been recruited for 120 community clinics in the Lalmonirhat district.
- 60 batches of CCMG leadership and management trainings for CG members, 4 batches of child protection and child centered community development approach trainings for community mobilizers have been conducted.
- A total of 120 Support Group Coordination meetings on critical health issues were organized in the project areas.
- The Community Clinic Management Committees have succeeded in raising funds for the development of the community clinics.
- Safe Motherhood Day, World Population Day and World Health Day have been organized through rallies, discussion meetings, etc.
- 47 film shows on relevant issues have been organized for awareness raising and knowledge sharing.

CCMG Participation making the clinic as model

Shakati Community Clinic is one of the four community clinics at Madati union in Kaliganj upazila under the district of Lalmonirhat. More than 15,000 people live in the surrounding areas of the clinic and a motivated and participatory campaign by the clinic management committee has made Shakati Community Clinic a model health center for the people of the neighboring areas.

It started in March 2011, when Plan Bangladesh conducted a 2-days leadership and management training of CCMG members which motivated the trainees to engage their all-out efforts for the improvement of the health status of the people in need. In the days following the training, the CCMG members formed 3 support groups and took up multi-pronged activities to make the clinic a vibrant center of health, nutrition and family planning related activities especially for the disadvantaged people. These activities included exchange view meeting, follow up activities, monthly and quarterly discussions with the UP and fund raising. The clinic has raised a fund amounting to 51,222 Taka from the local community. Madati union parishad has donated another 50,000 Taka for building an extension to the present clinic. The work of the extension building is now underway. Shafiqul Islam, a local philanthropist has donated a land for the clinic. The civil surgeon of Lalmonirhat has promised the CCMG to extend his support for the building of the extension as well as smooth running of the clinic. The committee hopes to turn the clinic into a community hospital for benefiting the larger cross-sections of underprivileged people. Besides, they planned for conducting training programs for paramedics which will help local unemployment youths to become self-reliant by receiving training. The committee members are preparing a detailed plan for this new initiative. They believe that, with everybody's help, they can make Shakati Community Clinic a beacon of hope for the disadvantaged communities who are deprived of their health rights. In this noble venture, they have got the union parishad as well as government health officials, health activists and people from all sections of life by their side.



