



NEWSLETTER

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Women Leadership in the Forefront of Discussions

On the occasion of International Women's Day-2021, we celebrated the achievements of women leaders from different generations and domains. We organised webinars, awarding ceremony, booklet launching, Interactive pot song, health campaign, discussion meetings, cultural events and story writing competition.

Our Cox's Bazar theatre group colleagues staged an Interactive Pot Song called 'Kanthay-Kanthay Golpo Gatha'. This pot song was presented through 6 Nakshi Kanthas prepared by Rohingya women that portrayed the stories of struggles and leaderships of Rohingya women in Bangladesh. This pot song was the brainchild of our colleague late Monir Uddin whom we lost all on a sudden just after the few days of this event. Possibly, that was the last public appearance of our deceased colleague Monir Uddin. We mourn for him and pray for his departed soul. We dedicate this newsletter to our colleague late Monir Uddin.

Through the same event of Cox's Bazar, we launched a booklet named 'Violence Against Women: it's a men's issue-an unfolding story'. With some real-life case studies, this booklet unveiled, for most of the cases on violence against women, men are the ultimate perpetrators.

We organised a women-led health campaign in Cox's Bazar in collaboration with UNDP and Cox's Bazar municipality. This health campaign offered free medical checkup for women and adolescent girls. A bioscope show for raising awareness on COVID-19 also took place during this health campaign.

Nasreen Srity Padak is the signature initiative of ActionAid Bangladesh. On the occasion of International Women's day, three women and a man were awarded Nasreen Srity Padak for their outstanding contributions to the society. This year, Sohanur Rahman, Susmita Sultana Swarnali, MS Hasna Begum and MS Rani Begum was awarded Nasreen Srity Padak.

We organised a virtual inter-generational adda with the grassroots, veteran and young women leaders through a webinar titled 'Celebrating Women Leadership'. In this adda, grassroots women leaders shared their stories of struggle, survival, and bravery wherein veteran women leaders as Firdous Azim, Khushi Kabir, Rasheda K. Chowdhury shared the history of 50 years of women's leadership in Bangladesh. The young women leaders facilitated this conversation between these two groups. This discussion helped identifying the gaps need to be addressed to promote women's leadership in Bangladesh and to invent way out for moving forward.

We also produced and launched a movie "Durdomonias (Indomitable)" developed by veteran film director Shameem Akhthar. This movie presents stories of hurdles and leaderships of four grassroots women.

To celebrate International Women's day, our 'Happy Home' girls organised a special discussion titled 'Violence Against Women in Globalization'. They also organised a cultural programme where songs, drama and dances were performed by themselves. A story writing competition also took place in 'Happy Home', where four winners were awarded for best stories.



Youths Embraced the Tough Journey for Climate Justice



Even if you take a car to travel from Satkhira Sadar to Munshigonj, Khulna division of Southeast Bangladesh, it will take over 4 hours of you. But youths never stopped their journey towards their demand for climate justice. The young peoples of our Youth-led Digital Engagement (YDE) Project organised 130 Kilometer bicycle march from Satkhira Sadar to Munshigonj in partnership with other youth groups and Coastal Development Organisation for Women (CDOW) Satkhira. The objectives of the Climate march were to draw attention of the national and global leaders on issues of climate change, raise community awareness on climate change and engage young people in local, national and global advocacy for ensuring climate justice. Total 30 youths participated in this bicycle march.

We Opt for a Dignified and Safe Working Environment

We prioritise creating a safer working culture that upholds the rights and dignity of all. We felt that our staff should be oriented on Sexual Harassment, Exploitation, and Abuse (SHEA) & safeguarding policies to generate their commitments for safer working environment. Considering these aspects, our Human Resource and Organisational Development (HROD) team organised day long training sessions on (SHEA) & safeguarding with all Dhaka based staff. Along with awareness raising on SHEA and safeguarding policies, this training also supported in identifying individual and collective responsibilities towards creating an effective and safe work environment. A total of 85 staff participated in this training conducted in 4 batches.



Upholding Children's Creativity with New Life Skills in New Normal Era



In this post-COVID new normal era, when the schools and play grounds are closed, children are almost separated from their friend circles, they seldom get the opportunity to nurture their inner creativity and even to adjust with their daily routine in these digitised days. It becomes difficult for the parents and care-givers to support children with practical, cognitive, emotional, social, and self-management skills. So, for the purpose of improving knowledge and skills in managing the children and upholding their spirits in this new normal life, we arranged a three- day-long Life Skill Based Education (LSBE) training at Local Rights Programme (LRP)-50. A total of 24 participants including the members of Child forum, Community Journalist group (CJG), LRP staff and field facilitators of LRP-50 participated in this training.



Ex-Garment Workers Received 5 Million BDT Cash Grants

We understood the misery and hurdles of the lives of the readymade garment workers who lost their jobs during COVID-19 pandemic. As a symbol of our empathy towards them, we distributed 5 Million BDT cash grants among 1000 ex-garment workers, wherein each individuals received 5000 taka. We distributed Hygiene Kits to the families of 600 garment workers in Dhaka and Chottogram. Each hygiene kit contains 5 antiseptic soaps, 5 packs of detergents, 5 reusable masks, 5 handcarchief and a bucket. We reached 3000 people with road show, mime show, street drama and folk songs with awareness message on COVID-19 in Dhaka and Chattogram.



February-2021

The Urban Traders Tested Earthquake and Fire Preparedness

It was a regular mid-morning market day of late winter. The buyers and sellers of the busy market place 'Chadnichawk' and 'Gausia' of capital Dhaka surprisingly found the fire service staff members rescuing and nursing some injured people, wherein no disaster took place in neighborhood. Actually, it was a mock drill on earthquake and fire preparedness to strengthen resilience of traders and urban communities and to reduce the impact of earthquake and fire in Bangladesh. This mock drill was organised by our Strengthening Urban Public-Private Programming for Earthquake Resilience (SUPER) project consortium and Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. The aim of this mock drill was to aware people on emergency preparedness, to identify planning gaps and to evaluate the preparedness of fire and earthquake safety settings of a specific place.



Global Day of Action for a #PeoplesVaccine

On 11 March 2020, World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Considering the importance of this day 'Global Justice Now' announced this day as 'Global Day of Action for a #PeoplesVaccine'. In this day people from around the world will be calling for a People's Vaccine – affordable for all countries and free to the public. As a part of the 'Global Day of Action for a #PeoplesVaccine', young Activistas (young volunteers) across the country mobilised a youth-led campaign on COVID-19 vaccination registration. To ensure easy access for the mass people, the youths established registration camps to common public places as local bazars, bus stands, Union Parishads, religious institutions etc. The Activistas negotiated with these respective institution's leaders for setting up the camps within their settlements. They announced in different areas to draw the attention of mass people to register themselves for having COVID-19 vaccine at free of cost from the registration camps. These young people also tried to raise awareness among the local marginalised communities to reduce rumor about the vaccine. Through this campaign, a total of 1496 people got registered (Male 859, Female 637) and received the vaccination card across the country.



We Ranked Top 10 in 'Walk for Survival' Global Campaign

In the wake of COVID-19, a fairer, better world is not only a matter of justice rather a matter of survival. Together Global March/ Walk for survival aimed to complete a journey around the earth (40,000km). ActionAid Bangladesh contributed to this global march with 2253km by walking together the earth's circumference and awarded as one of the top 10 contributors to the federation-wide global 'Walk for Survival'. In Bangladesh, ActionAid and its wider family including partner organisations, supporters, networks and individuals walked with the demand for a just, fair and green recovery addressing gender-based violence, COVID-19 and climate crisis.



Women Entrepreneurs Having Weekly 200K Turnover

The women entrepreneurs of Gabtoli upazila, Bogura district fostered establishing a marketing channel with national level online marketing platform, 'Parmeeda' under our Making Market Work for Women (MMWW) project. This platform successfully ensured better prices for the agro-based products of women entrepreneur. Our MMWW project developed a business venture named 'Nari Uddoktya Ponnya Vandar'. Women entrepreneurs are directly linked to 'Parmeeda' through this business venture and receiving payment against the delivery of their products. The women entrepreneurs are supplying two batches of products to 'Parmeeda' each week and the average weekly turnover is around BDT 2,00,000.



January-2021

Women Leaders Effort on Addressing Climate Crisis got Awarded

ActionAid Bangladesh is facilitating women and youth- led solutions to environment and climate crisis that are practical and scalable such as women-led agroecology schools, seedbanks, divisional hubs on climate change and resilience. Recently, we recognised two women leaders, Lake Begum and Jannatul Mouwa with awards for their extraordinary contributions in addressing climate crisis. Between the two awardees, Lake Begum has been practicing climate resilient agriculture for over a decade. She has inspired many women farmers to cognize the agroecology approach. Another awardee, Jannatul Mouwa, has set an example of 'Courage of Conviction' by challenging the social norms in leading a group of young women to engage in social transformation. The award winners, Lake Begum and Jannatul Mouwa were given BDT 25 thousand each as the prize money at the closing ceremony of the virtual event 'Gobeshona Global Conference'.



Time to Care Before the River is Rare

These were the news headings of the country's highest circulated newspapers during the (virtual) '6th International Water Conference-2021' organised by ActionAid Bangladesh. The versatile issues of concerns related to water including river flow, rights to water resources, water commons, transboundary river issues, water and gender and many other aspects related to water were discussed in this international conference. This year the conference theme was 'Water Climate and Justice in the Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic'. The conference included 4 key thematic sessions: Water Commons: Lessons from COVID-19; Water Gender and COVID-19 nexus; Rights of Rivers; Water and Climate: Grassroots Innovation and Solutions. The 6th International Water Conference held during 27- 29 January, went beyond territorial and disciplinary boundaries, looked into aspects of water as the key element providing solutions toward a just and green recovery to the climate and COVID-19 crisis that the world is facing currently. Total 852 participants attended through zoom and 24372 through our social media outlets.

“By year **2050** the demand of water will go up by **50%**”

“**River** has the **rights to flow** as it was **flowing**”

“Take More Responsible Role for Protection of the Rivers”

