

ACTIONAID
BANGLADESH
ANNUAL REPORT
2012

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people

28 LONG TERM
LOCAL RIGHTS
PROGRAMMES
53 NGOs

1200 community
based organisations

34 networks
worked with
excluded groups and
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poverty

4
movements

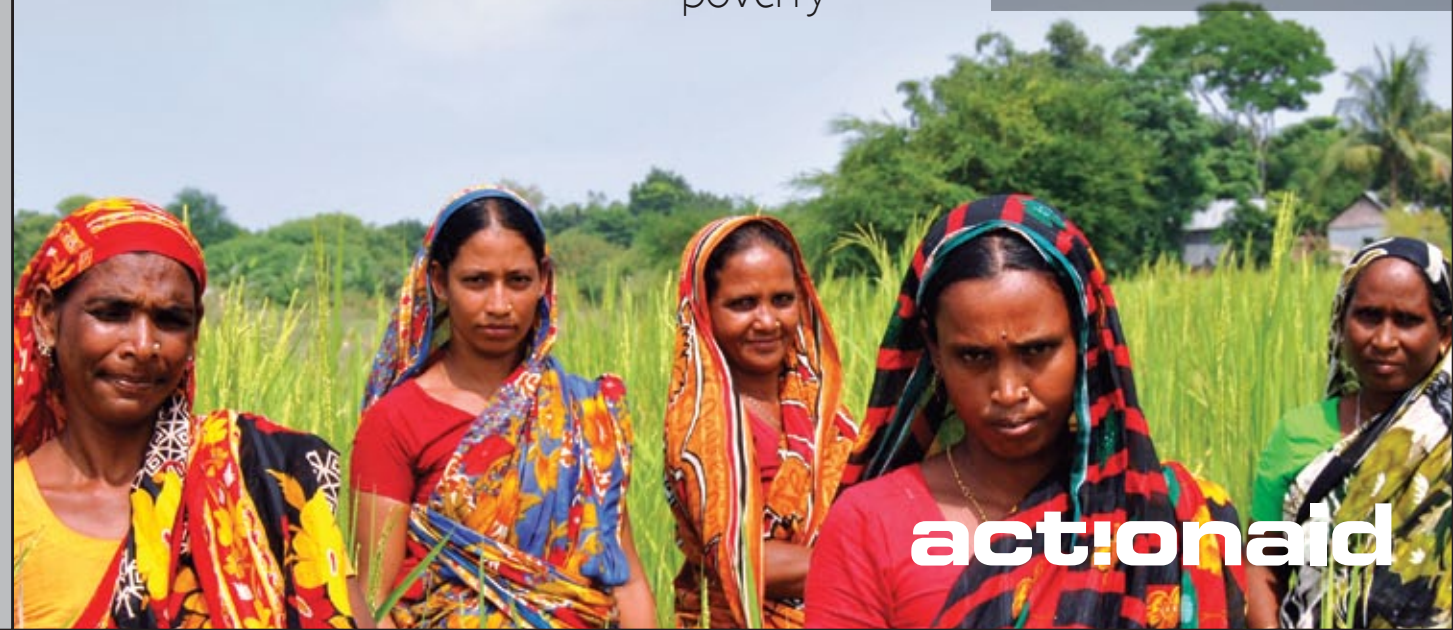
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House #8, Road #136, Gulshan-1, Dhaka 1212

Ph: +88028837796, +8802989433

Email: aab.mail@actionaid.org, www.actionaid.org/bangladesh

Designed by ZANALA Bangladesh



ACTIONAID BANGLADESH ANNUAL REPORT 2012

2012: The year for getting into new strategy and structure

In 2012, ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) spent a significant time for creating understanding on new Country Strategy Paper (CSP-IV) and developing programmes in line with the document. Substantial amount of time was also invested in change management process and capacity building of the staff and partners on new CSP and programming approach (Human Rights Based Approach-HRBA).

In 2012, we worked with **134,524** people [Female: 37%, Male: 28%, Girls: 11%, Boys: 11%, Adolescent boys: 6% and Adolescent girls: 7%] by implementing **28** long term Local Rights Programmes (LRPs) with **53** NGOs, **34** networks, **5** alliances, **4** movements and **1200** community based organisations.

We worked with excluded groups and individuals living in poverty and their organizations, movements to build their active agencies so that they can lead their own social change process. Our core constituencies were spread across age, sex, location and diverse categories of exclusion. Also, to support people's action as part of solidarity, we worked with state and non-state actors and institutions.

ActionAid is a global federation working to end poverty and injustice with thousands of communities and millions of people across the planet.

Our **VISION** is "a world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity."
Our **MISSION** is "to work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice."

AA's theory of change stands on Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA).

We believe that an end to poverty and injustice can be achieved through purposeful individual and collective action, led by the active agency of people living in poverty and supported by solidarity, credible rights-based alternatives and campaigns that address the structural causes and consequences of poverty.



Innovations/ Alternatives

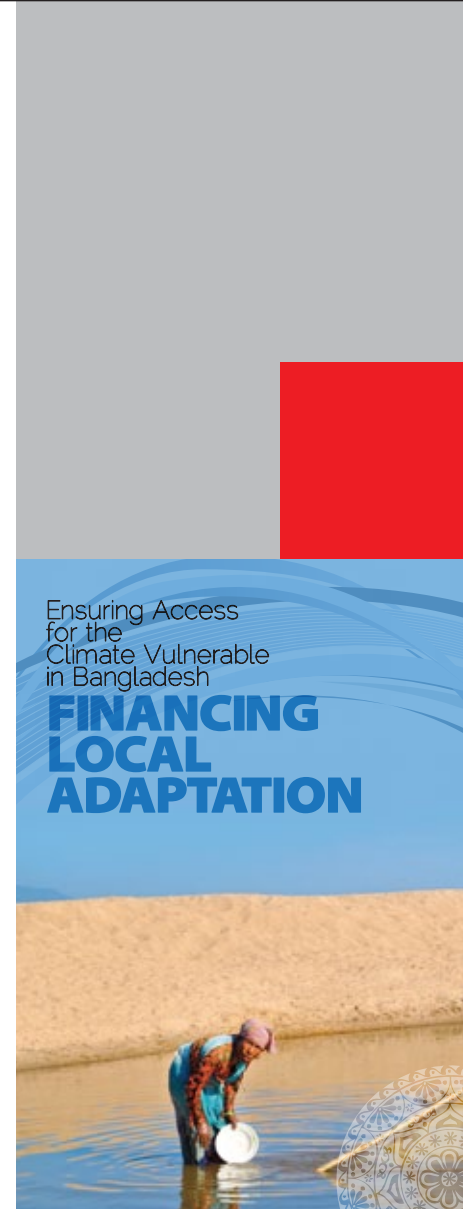
Climate Resilient and Economically Viable Genotype

Smallholder poultry as an alternative livelihood option has widely developed and been practiced in Bangladesh. But the situation remains far from satisfactory, given the limited growth rate of poultry population. To carry the poultry revolution ahead, Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University and AAB have through a joint research have successfully innovated and tested a Climate Resilient and Economically Viable Chicken Genotype in Sapahar, Naogaon, adrought prone area in Bangladesh. Experiment reveals that the developed genotypes were significantly better than the existing local chicken in terms of weight, growth, mortality and hatchability, which makes it more resilient and viable.



Community-Led Violence-free School Environment

In Faridpur, RACINE with assistance from AAB came up with a comprehensive model to create violence-free environment for the girls, particularly inside and en route to school. With an integrated approach that brought community (e.g. young fellows, community elites etc), school (e.g. students, teachers, SMCs), local government and law enforcing agencies together, this model has formed works at three tiers for each school: (a) student groups, (b) community SVAG (stop violence against girls) committee, and (c) school SVAG committee consisting of teachers and school management committee (SMC) members. This three-tier model has greatly reduced VAG in the particular communities.



Financing Local Adaptation: Ensuring Access for the Climate Vulnerable People

Bangladesh is considered one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. To address this situation Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and development partners have made climate finance available in two national funds to which government agencies can apply. Through a research on 'Financing Local Adaptation: Ensuring Access for the Climate Vulnerable in Bangladesh', Action Research for Community Adaptation in Bangladesh (ARCAB) and AAB with funding from the Embassy of Denmark developed a model for financing local adaptation. This financing model proposes that with the fund a pilot project will be implemented, led by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (MoLGRDC), which would aim to demonstrate the feasibility of direct climate financing to local government windows. The funds would then be sent directly into local government agencies' bank accounts. Rigorous M&E would be undertaken to determine the viability of the finance mechanism.



Advocacy Successes



In the Ulipur upazila (sub-district) in Kurigram district, the issues from civil society-led school development plans were incorporated into Upazila Education Plans, thus making way for addressing particular needs of the students and school community.. 13 union parishads, the lowest tier of local government, also formulated gender sensitive participatory budgets.

As a result of AAB's advocacy, the Centre for Medical Education and Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) of the government have incorporated mass casualty management (MCM) as an essential component in both national medical curriculum and nursing curriculum. DGHS also allocated funds to conduct training on MCM for doctors and nurses working in the government health complexes all over the country.

In Chittagong, the community groups organised a workshop with the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) representatives with a view to practising the Anti Sexual Harassment Policy in all schools under the CCC. The CCC agreed upon and a basic training was conducted with all officials of CCC. They also strengthened community protection system by forming watch committees with support from CCC councillors.

AAB's advocacy made it possible that the Ministry of Social Welfare of the government declared to observe the "Bangla Sign Language Day" on 7th February every year.

In Domar, Nilphamari, community people critically realised the importance of uniting themselves to take possession of the khas land they were allocated long before. It resulted in huge community movement. They claimed their possession against the documents they once got and demonstrated before the district administration. As a result 46 landless families received their possession on the allocated khas land.

Activista Bangladesh put youth voices by generating a youth proposal in the "Bangladesh position paper" which was developed by the government for Rio+20 Summit with the objective of creating solidarity and collectivism of national youth network towards "One Youth Voice" and to engage in decision making processes which has a direct impact upon their lives and future.

Mass Sensitisation Events

1st National Women Farmers' Convention

On 15th October 2012, thousands of women from more than 40 districts of the country raised voice on the streets of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh with the slogans- We demand RIGHT TO FOOD FOR ALL and Social and State Recognition of Women Farmers. Yes, this is about the '1st National Women Farmers' Convention 2012' in Bangladesh! To celebrate the World Food Day and World Rural Women's Day, AAB organised the convention, which was a culmination of AAB's works and efforts for years.



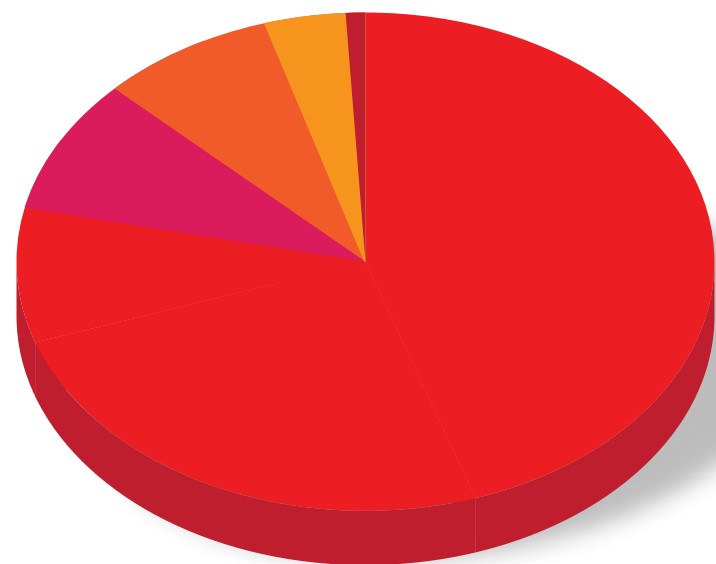
Elected Grassroots Women Leaders Honoured on Int'l Women's Day 2012

Given the importance of adolescent issues in the recent time, the United Nations (UN) set 'Connecting Girls, Inspiring Future' as the theme for International Women's Day 2012. AAB, considering the national and organisational context, tailored the theme as 'Connecting Grassroots Leadership: Inspiring Girls' Participation'. The weeklong initiatives included policy dialogue, Nasreen Memorial Award, cultural event, street campaign, art competition among the children, debate programme at local and national level and 10-day long online campaign. In the local government election 2011, 96 grassroots women leaders working with AAB and partners were elected. They were felicitated through a colourful event. Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs of Bangladesh Government awarded them on their enormous successes.



4th National Knowledge Convention on Poverty and Development

More than three hundred people from development researchers, practitioners, academics, government, donors, NGOs participated in the convention during 12-13 December 2012 at BRAC Centre Inn, Dhaka. AAB, Practical Action and Plan jointly organised this event. Mr. Hasanul Haque Inu, Information Minister of GoB inaugurated the convention. The convention presented around twenty four research papers around poverty and development issues and twenty two best practices in eight parallel sessions.



Expenditure in 2012

- **Governance 1%** (86,000 GBP)
- **Fundraising 4%** (225,000 GBP)
- **Support Function 8%** (473,000 GBP)
- **National level Program 11%** (624,000 GBP)
- **Local Rights program 76%** (4360,000 GBP)

Stories of Change

Collective efforts matter

Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. - The quote by Martin Luther King Jr. invokes the notion of the strength of collective efforts. History testifies that when this effort has awoken, it has ushered in revolutionary change -- and often it is the poor and adversely affected segments of society that have been instrumental in ushering in those changes.

The success ActionAid Bangladesh's women participants achieved in establishing access to safe drinking water for the 2,500 dwellers of Chanpara slum by persistently lobbying local lawmakers testifies to the strength of collective efforts. The Liberation War rendered tens of thousands of families homeless, including those of the Chanpara slum. The government relocated many of the families to different slums across the divisional cities. In 1975 the government rehabilitated a section of the displaced people by relocating them to the Chanpara slum in Narayangan on the outskirts of Dhaka city. Since then, Chanpara has become the permanent residence of these destitute families who have been living without access to basic services.

The situation changed in 2009 when ActionAid Bangladesh initiated the Kadoorie Charitable Foundation (KCF) funded project, "Enhancing Environmental Health and Women Empowerment in Chanpara Slum". The residents of Chanpara slum were brought under the jurisdiction of Kayetpara Union Parishad. For the first time in 35 years the relocated residents of Chanpara started to gain access to basic services that had been denied to



them. Before ActionAid's involvement, many different organisations intervened in attempts to improve the lives and livelihoods of the Chanpara people; however, few changes took place for the families. Rather, the problems in the daily life of the slum dwellers, especially in regards to access to safe water, a proper drainage system and sanitation facilities, continued. The biggest problem was a lack of legal protection afforded to citizens by the government.

At Chanpara, women had always been on the receiving end of the worst forms of discrimination. The patriarchal nature of society had ensured that such inequities were internalized and heavily entrenched. One of AAB's primary goals was to break this barrier. To this end, a Reflect Circle, ActionAid's innovative approach to adult learning and change built upon participatory methods, a coherent rights-based process for conscientisation and empowerment, was formed in the locality in July 2011. The circle participants, primarily women, came to know and understand rights due to them. They later mobilised, pressed home their demands collectively and initially forced the local administration to come up with the promise to protect their lives and improve the living conditions in Chanapara slum.

Initially, the Reflect Circle participants identified scarcity of drinking water and a poor drainage system as their cardinal problems. The participants advocated to the local administration for unhindered access to safe drinking water and installation of a proper drainage system for 45,000 people living in the slum. Having failed to get redress, they put forth their demands to local lawmakers. In addition to advocacy efforts, the women participants collectively raised funds from the community and repaired the drainage system by their own initiative.

"The four submergible pumps functional in the locality are too inadequate to serve the Chanpara Slum community of more than 45,000 people," says Hawa Begum. She added that the MP finally agreed to provide them with eight submergible pumps, which will serve the major part of the slum.

"Previously community participants had to buy safe drinking water. For household they used water from the river," Hawa Begum stated. "Now I have time in my hand after doing household activities because I don't have any tension to collect water from different sources. Now I'm thinking to start livelihood for earning," she concluded.

MP Golam Dastogir Gazi stated that "I am pretty impressed to see this collective effort and their courage to change their community. For their effort, approximately 2,500 people of the community will get benefit during this rainy season."

Vogdaburi UP—A vanguard against child marriage

The child marriage scenario in northern Bangladesh has a significantly higher rate. Experts claim several underlying reasons for this scenario, including extreme poverty, social prejudice, ignorance of senior citizens and a higher rate of unemployment among women. As a result, young and adolescent girls have to bear the brunt for their families while young boys are used as means to gain a dowry.



Amid such conditions, changing attitude and behaviour of people for upholding women's equal rights is a formidable task. Nonetheless, people of Vogdaburi union persevered to break the vicious cycle of such harmful traditional practices and turned Vogdaburi into a child-marriage free union, thanks to the efforts of community leaders who made this possible. Inspired, people of the neighbouring areas have also taken similar steps to stop child marriage.

Vogdaburi, a union under Domar upazila of Nilphamari district in the northwest of Bangladesh, was plagued by social maladies even four years back. ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) began its operation in that area in 2009 by forming Reflect circles, ActionAid's innovative method to adult learning, empowerment and social change. Reflect is based on human rights based approach implemented through forming circle of the local people and led by women. With support from AAB and the local implementing partner organisation USS, circle participants identified and analysed their pressing problems, found solutions and took actions to address those problems. Undertaking the entire process for two years, the circles in the union formed a Lokokendra (popularly known as people's organisation). Protyasha Lokokendra, one of the people's organisations working in Vogdaburi union, played an instrumental role in curbing early marriage.

Members of the organisation met the Union Parishad (local government) Standing Committee On Violence Against Women And Children in May of last year. With support from the local administration, ActionAid carried out the social movement where local students, parents, teachers, the government, non-government officials and people from all walks of life attended the discussion.

"The women often become victims of violence because of dowry and the girls married early cannot cope with husband's family and also become prone to domestic violence." Then, inspired by this social movement and motivated by different actors, the Chairman declared, "From now Vogdaburi is a child marriage free union." He further added, "I request all of you to work together to make our union free from child marriage and dowry practices."

Through the social movement it came to be perceived by all that the dignity of women could be upheld only if dowry and child marriage were eliminated from the society. Additionally, the social movement, in essence, was also working to eliminate inequality between men and women. As dowry and child marriage are major causes of domestic

violence, the social movement could be instrumental to stop all such causes of violence against women and torture of girls, thus freeing society from unequal and inhuman treatment against women.

Disaster Management Act 2012: A long awaiting accomplishment

We sincerely thank the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) for the enactment of the Disaster Management Act (DMA) 2012. We also acknowledge civil society actors for their persistent advocacy efforts to influence the GoB for the enactment of the act. ActionAid Bangladesh was actively involved in the process of preparing the draft of the Act, providing feedback during different consultation processes and influencing the Government for the enactment. AAB initiated the process through a roundtable discussion, organised jointly with the national weekly newspaper "Shaptahik", where the relevant stakeholders, i.e. the Minister for Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM), eminent members of the Parliament, experts on disaster and climate change, Government officials and civil society members, discussed the draft Act and shared feedback. The feedback from the roundtable discussion was welcomed by the ministry and they opined their interest to consider those for a meaningful and inclusive DMA.

The GoB enacted the Disaster Management Act on the 24th of September 2012 with an aim to facilitate accountability across different levels of institutions and actors working on disaster management. The Act has a wide scope that includes an overall disaster management framework, components on disaster risk reduction, emergency response, climate change adaptation and preparedness, capacity building of the Government and private

sector, humanitarian assistance and recovery, Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) and Department of Disaster Management (DDM), activation of the Standing Order on Disaster (SOD), delineated roles of different ministries and agencies, organisational reforms and the formulation of a Disaster Management Policy.

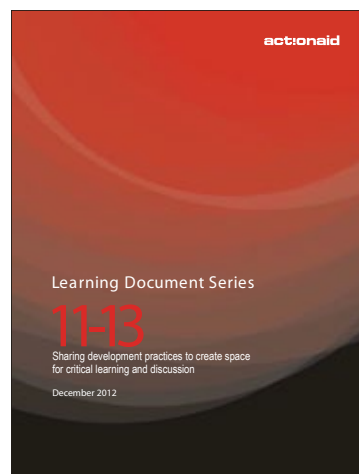
The Act clarifies how to declare a state of disaster emergency and outlines the process in the event of a disaster. The process includes provisions for the involvement of NGOs and non-state actors and the requisition of moveable and immovable property. The role of humanitarian assistance, the roles and level of accountability of officials, as well as a process for filing complaints are also included in the Act. The participation of law enforcement agencies is now included in the state of emergency. The Act also clarifies resource mobilisation in emergency response and gives direction on how disaster management funds should be managed and accessed and how procurement in a crisis should be fast tracked.

The Act identifies misuse of resources and inaction as a criminal offence. Upon strong advocacy from AAB, the Act specifies the punishment for such cases and allows for compensation in man-made disasters. Also, it includes a provision for special allowances to recognise any heroic actions taken during disasters. Regional treaties are also included in the Act so that necessary resources can be allocated and channelled to the people.

As one of the first steps, merging of departments and affecting the new organisational structure have kicked off. Emphasis has also been put on moving from a 'relief' to 'risk reduction' approach by activating the SOD guidelines.

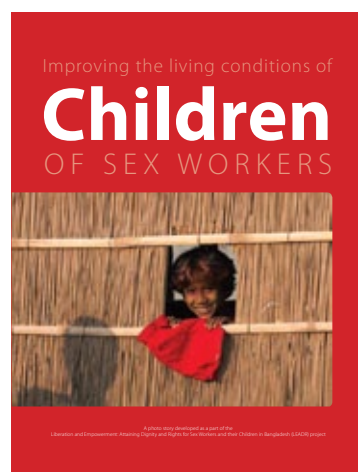
ActionAid has a long history of engagement in disaster risk reduction initiatives at the rural level. Our lobby for the enactment of the Act was based on our field experience from hazard/disaster prone areas and from different studies conducted on disasters and vulnerabilities in different ecological zones.



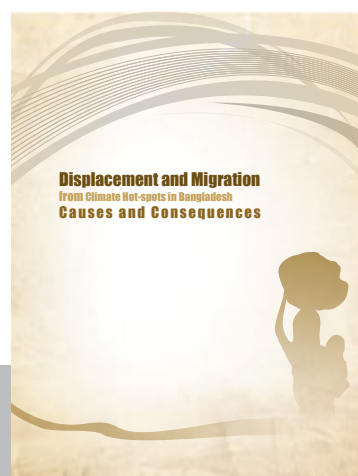


'Learning Document Series 11-13' contains three development alternatives. The first alternative talks about participatory video, which has significant success in campaigning on rights and change of mindsets. The second alternative features how grassroots leadership helps promote right to education. Finally the learning about Lokokendra (people's organisation) shows how to create enabling space for people to determine action points to take against inequalities and injustice.

Publications in 2012



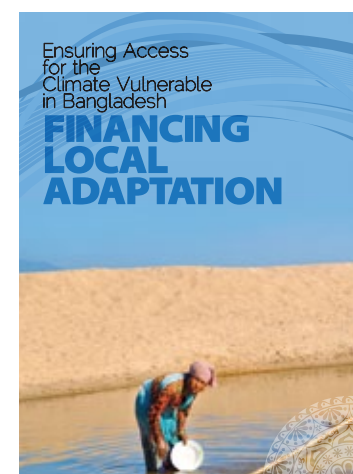
Would you like to know how the children live inside a brothel in Bangladesh? This photo book offers the reader the opportunity of discovering the life of the children born in this confined and segregated place. It also gives hope. Hope for change, hope for improvement.



The report describes a study (conducted in the climate hot-spots of Bangladesh) that aims to understand the causes and consequences of displacement and migration triggered especially by climate change. The report aims to raise awareness about this issue amongst policy makers, development practitioners, academics and other stakeholders.



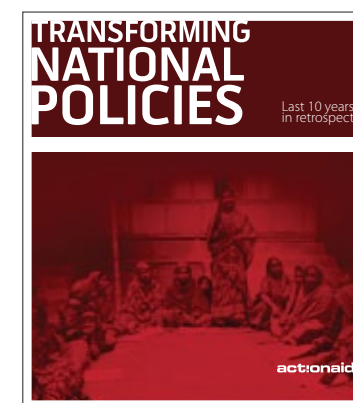
Shikkhay Odhikar: Reference Handbook (trans: reference handbook on education rights), a Bangla publication, aims to strengthen the 'right to education movement' across the country while providing ready references to the education rights activists. It is a compilation of relevant articles and clauses on education in Bangladesh's Constitution.



The research report focuses on Bangladesh as a case study in exploring how to bridge the divide between adaptation finance at the national level and vulnerable communities at the local level.

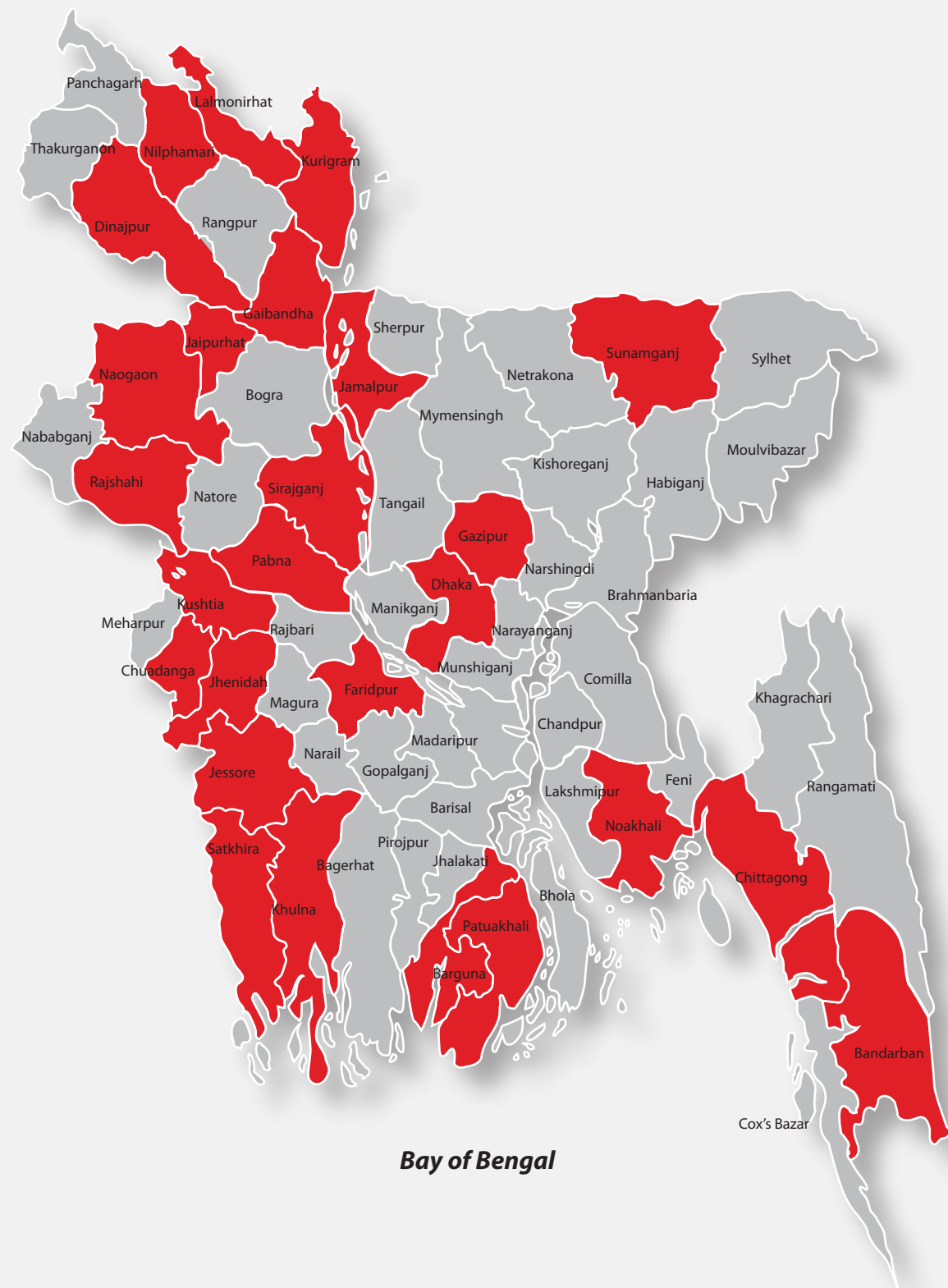


The first issue of our e-magazine captures our work that took place with support from partner NGOs as well as external development practitioners. We hope you find it interesting and appreciate the efforts of the authors as well as the members of editorial boards.



We have been doing development work in Bangladesh for the last 29 years and have achieved amazing feats. In last 10 years we carried out significant work in transforming national policies that affected millions of Bangladeshi citizens. Seven brief stories inside will portray how people themselves could struggle and change policies and why we need to be more closely engaged and work with them in transforming their lives...

The Publications are available at www.actionaid.org/bangladesh/publications



● Our Long-term commitments in 2012 are in highlighted districts

We Govern Our Organisation

Building the boat while sailing was the motto constructing ActionAid International federation. Thus the journey - transforming to an organisation led by north - to one which is accountable to the people living in poverty and excluded by the society/ state evolved in last one decade. To live with its spirit and maximise the value being global - it adopted as one of its core principle - a two-tier governance structure - which consists of a smaller International Board and an International Assembly representing each member (Member Country). In parallel, at the national level, members have national Boards and General Assemblies.

Following the same values and spirit ActionAid Bangladesh framed its governance structure to ensure engagement of the people with and for whom it works in the overarching governance structure of the organisation. "Preference will be given to Members from the poor and excluded sections or those who represent the positive interest of the communities with which the Society works. Such members shall constitute 50% of the General Assembly..." mentioned in the Constitution of ActionAid Bangladesh. And in the process Saleha Begum and Sabina Malo two charismatic female leaders of ActionAid's local rights programme joined this highest decision making body - General Assembly - formed in 2012.

As part of its nationalisation process ActionAid Bangladesh opted human rights-based approach of governance system as spelled out in the federation's governance manual. We formed our General Assembly with 25 Members based on the criteria prescribed in organisation's Governance Manual. The mission is now to become an Affiliate Member of the federation taking Saleha/ Sabina's voice at the global decision-making level - contributing more actively building the federation as it was visioned.

It is to be noted that during ActionAid International's Assembly 2012 two of ActionAid Bangladesh's Executive Board Members were elected - to convene the Assembly 2013 and as a Member of the Elections Committee. Two of the Board Members visited ActionAid Myanmar programme to share our story building the governance process within ActionAid Bangladesh.

Our General Assembly

- Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Chairperson
- M Hafizuddin Khan, Treasurer
- Begum Rokeya (Executive Board Member)
- Monsur Ahmed Chowdhury (Executive Board Member)
- Parveen Mahmud FCA (Executive Board Member)
- Angela Gomes (Executive Board Member)
- Shahdeen Malik PhD (Executive Board Member)
- Sumaiya Khair PhD (Executive Board Member)
- Syeda Rizwana Hasan Advocate (Executive Board Member)
- Saleha Begum
- Dr. Khalilur Rahman
- Abul Momen
- Shahnoaz M Akbar PhD



- Zahida Ispahani
- Muhammad Zafar Iqbal PhD
- Ali Imam Majumder
- Kanakchanpa Chakma
- Rahima Sultana Kazal
- Hla Shing Nue
- Momtaz Ara Begum
- Syed Nurul Alam
- Showvik Das
- Sabina Malo
- Mahboob Alam
- Md. Asadullah Khan