

Imran Hossain: Breaking the Barriers



Imran Hossain, a spinal cord injury survivor, grew up in Savar in a very poor economic condition where his father was the only earning member. Being one of the 4 children of his parents, he had to face a lot of adversities from his childhood. His family couldn't support his study so he could only study till class 8. After his father's retirement, he became the earning member and was entitled to bear every expenses of the family. To turn his luck, he went to Jeddah at the age of 18 to earn the livelihood for his family. He had to go through a lot of hardships to find suitable work in Jeddah. Finally when he found a decent job and started sending money to his family back in Bangladesh, he met with an accident there while working. As he was an illegal migrant he didn't have healthcare insurance and even the permission to be treated in the hospitals of Jeddah. They sent him back to Bangladesh without any preliminary treatment. His family tried their best to support him to be treated. But it was already too late and he lost his ability to walk for the rest of his life. After that all he faced was the unruly environment from the society and relatives demeaning him every now and then. But he didn't lose hope and started working with various groups of persons with disabilities.

In Janury 2019, Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) started implementation of project *Rights, Justice and Entitlements for Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (RJE-PiB)* with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and UK-Aid. During project development phase, CDD came into contact with Imran. Later, after assessing his competency and potentially he was

offered to work as Union Facilitator for Savar and Bongao Union Parihads of Savar Upazilla under this project from CDD. He has to conduct in total 18 ward meetings in every month and visit persons with disabilities when necessary. Also he helps the target people to get included in the govt.'s safety net facilities like disability allowance, education allowance for children with disabilities studying in schools and applying for govt. loan for persons with disabilities etc. He has mobilized around 480 persons with disabilities and given them a voice by making groups of them. Any Violence against Women (VAW) especially against persons with disabilities are addressed promptly and taken into justice in the project area all with his interventions. He has established a nexus between the local administration, government and the targeted persons with disabilities. The most important thing that he could achieve is that he created a space of trust among the persons with disabilities in his working area who share all difficulties with him they face in their everyday life. He changed the lives of several person with disability by creating awareness and sensitize them about their rights. He has become a role model to the persons with disability community who follow and honor him.



After his recruitment in CDD, his life as a person with disability changed in every possible direction. Now that he is working and earning, society's perception about him also changed and elevated. He started living his life as a person with dignity who is contributing economically to his family. A customized tri cycle (a motor powered by batteries is fitted with his regular tri cycle) was given to him from the project so that he can move easily in field and travel to office every day. With his hard work and dedication, he has already become an asset to both RJE-PiB project.

and CDD. He is a very good example that persons with disabilities can also work and contribute to their family's expenses, therefore, they can be valuable to their family and society. Thus he is transforming this society into a better place where every person with disability will be revered and respected like any human being.