

insight

A Quarterly Newsletter of the PHRPBD Project

Insight is a quarterly newsletter of the Promotion of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (PHRPBD) project. It aims to bring out the news and views of the project’s activities took place in each quarter of the project-year. **Insight** also serves as a mouthpiece of persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups for raising their needs and voicing their rights to the appropriate authorities.

Editorial

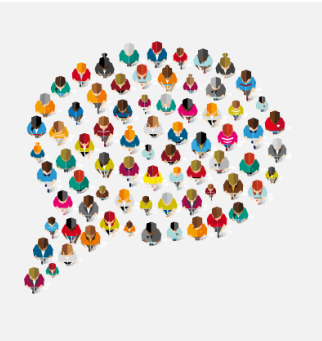
Dear readers,

This issues of the **Insight** brings you the status of the interventions of the PHRPBD project spanning from April 2021 – June 2021. This issue covers the programme-areas of the project with the number of persons with disabilities reached in the given time. It also features an exciting case story on a person with disability along with an interactive interview of the contact-person of the project’s one of the implementing partner organizations.

The **Insight** also presents COVID-19 response initiatives of the project and an infographic presentation of the project’s VSLA activities. The news on the PHRPBD project’s end-evaluation would also be found here.

Hope you enjoy reading the first issue of the **Insight**.
Happy reading!

Development and Editorial Team



Members of a SHG in Kulaura, Moulvibazar conducting monthly group meeting.



Rokhsana, a girl with physical disability. She is a member of a women-only SHG.

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Programme Snapshot

Awareness Raising

The PHRPBD project ran awareness programme in the community, government & non-government offices, and with the local public-representatives regarding disability inclusion and mainstreaming.



724
persons

Male | 137
Female | 587

Initiative of SHGs and Apex Bodies

In the reporting period, a total of 242 meetings took place of the SHGs and the Apex Bodies. In these meetings, the group members discussed about different issues ranging from health, livelihood, education etc.



1,304
persons

Male | 602
Female | 702

Health and Rehabilitation

Under the project, in the mentioned quarter, the project has provided its project-participants with PRT (153), MHN (119), and referral services (77). Aside that, a large number of persons received assistive devices.



442
persons

Male | 209
Female | 233

Inclusion in Government Services

A large number of persons with disabilities have been involved in the government's safety-net scheme through the proactive advocacy of the SHGs and the Apex Bodies in different areas.



249
persons

Male | 119
Female | 130

Livelihood

As an outcome of the continued advocacy efforts of the SHG and Apex Bodies, a total of 89 persons with disabilities were involved in different kinds of livelihood initiatives i.e. IGA (wage & self), training on IGA, and loan support.



89
persons

Male | 39
Female | 40

Inclusive Education

In spite of the lockdown, through the project's initiatives, students with disabilities have been followed up during the mentioned quarter of the PHRPBD project through SHG and Apex Body members.



99
students

Boys | 49
Girls | 50

Participation

During this quarter (April 2021 - June 2021) of the project, a large number of persons with disabilities participated in different workshops, trainings, day observance etc. in collaboration with the government and the non-government bodies.



918
persons

Male | 494
Female | 424

Reached in Numbers

When Sky is the Limit | A Case Story

Ripon Kazi is a person with physical disability. He is of 28 years of age. He resides in Kalapara, Patuakhali with his family. He was not born with disability. He acquired disability by falling from a tree which caused him spinal-cord injury. From then on, the suffering of Ripon's life started looming. The family members started to ignore him and considered a burden for the family.

But, Ripon's life took a turn when he came under the purview of the interventions of the PHRPBD project through a SHG member. Through the project he was provided with a wheel-chair which helped increase his mobility.

Then, he has been made a member of Shapla SHG in that catchment area of the project. After joining the group his confidence increased to a great extent. As he has some literacy, he was assigned with maintaining the register-book of the SHG.

Later on, Ripon involved himself in the IGA activity of the project and took loan from the VSLA group of BDT 40,000. Then he individually started aquaculture. This initiative turned out very successful and he made a lot of profit (BDT 38,000). Then he started contributing to his family's financial issues.

Ripon has proved that, disability could not a barrier for a person to become successful in life.



Ripon Kazi

Featured News | End-Evaluation of the PHRPBD Project

The end-evaluation of the Promotion of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (PHRPBD) project took place throughout the month, June 2021. Out of the 09 catchment areas of the project, the evaluation was carried out in the 04 catchment areas i.e. Chakaria (Cox's Bazar), Kulaura (Moulvibazar), Kalapara (Patuakhali), and Gazipur. And, a virtual evaluation was conducted in Jamalpur.

In the end-evaluation, the evaluation-team, which was composed of two persons with disabilities, assessed the results of the interventions of the PHRPBD project through several interviews and meetings with different government and non-government stakeholders of the project and focused group discussions (FGD) the SHGs & Apex Bodies, and formal discussions with the local public-representatives along with other evaluation related activities.

The SHGs and the Apex Bodies portrayed their good learnings and best practices to the evaluation team. The evaluation-team highly appreciated the drive and spirit of the members of the SHGs and the Apex Bodies. Fatema Mahamuda, team leaders of the evaluation team, said, ***"The way the persons with disabilities of these groups present themselves is truly amazing."***

The final end-evaluation report is supposed to be submitted in the mid of July 2021.



The evaluation-team is conducting a FGD with a SHG at Kulaura, Moulvibazar.

Achievement | Separate Room Allocation in Government Hospital

It is often observed that despite the availability of services, persons with disabilities remain unable to access to services due to inaccessible infrastructure of different government offices. Given the issue, the Self-Help Groups and the Apex Bodies of Chakaria, Cox's Bazar ran advocacy initiatives with Chakaria Upazila Health Complex authority to make the hospital accessible for persons with disabilities.

As a result, the hospital authority allocated a separate room on the ground floor in the hospital dedicating only to the persons with disabilities to ensure their rightful services. In the inauguration ceremony, Dr. Amzadul Huq, Upazila Health and Family Planning officer, stated, ***"The Government is always on the side of persons with disabilities and committed to provide them all required services to ensure their rights are recognized."***

The hospital authority also appointed a person with disability, as a volunteer, would be helping the service recipients with disabilities in the hospital.



The allocated room for persons with disabilities in the government hospital.

The following infographic showcases the VSLA activities of the PHRPBD project spanning from January 2021 – June 2021

Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA)

Key Information 2021



VSLA Statistical Data

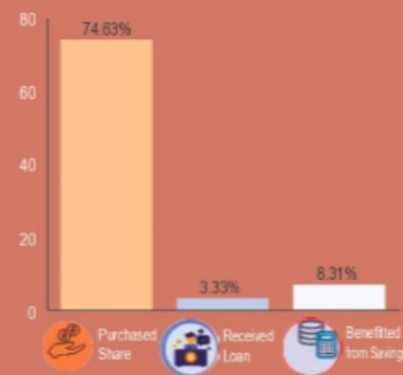
BDT 8,37,729
Total savings including social-fund

BDT 7,86,400
Total loan transaction excluding social-fund

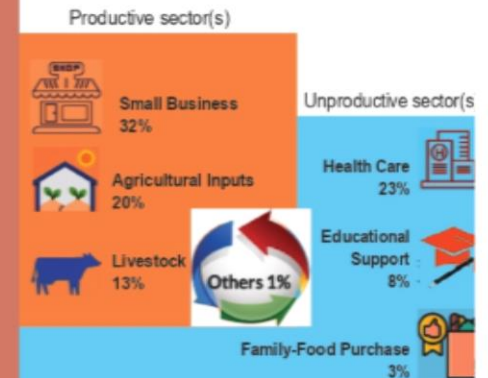
Participants' Info

34 groups
481 total members
63% female
37% male

Activity Percentage & Benefit over Savings



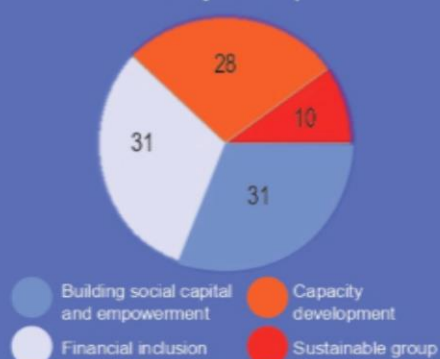
Use of Loan



COVID-19 Effects on VSLA

- Postponed meetings
- Restricted movement
- Loss of IGA
- Increased health hazards
- Stopped transaction
- Reduced attendance in VSLA meeting
- Decreased income
- Increased cost

VSLA Effects on Community Development



The VSLA activities implemented by the PHRPBD project gained popularity in the project's catchment areas over the years.

A large number of SHG members along with the community people became interested in VSLA activities. Afterwards, they initiated their own VSLA activities with handful resources.

The reason behind the widespread interest in the community is the massive success in VSLA among the SHG members.

A Dialogue with Yesmin Sultana

Yesmin Sultana (39) is a Community Disability Resource Person (CDRP) of the PHRPBD project working in Chakaria, Cox's Bazar. Here, she is sharing her experience with the **Insight** team.

Question (Q): How long have been working for the PHRPBD project?

Answer (A): Around there (03) years.

Q: What types of work do you do?

A: Raising community awareness about disability inclusion is one of my main areas of work. Aside that, I assist the SHGs and the Apex Bodies to conduct monthly meetings. I work to liaison between the SHGs & Apex Bodies and the Local Government service providers. I coordinate the distribution of assistive devices provided by the project for the persons with disabilities.

Q: Do you have any special training?

A: Yes, I do. I am trained in Primary Rehabilitation Therapy (PRT). I provided need-based therapy services to the project-participants of this project.

Q: Have you observed any positive changes in the local government offices towards persons with disabilities?

A: Of course. Now the local government offices are more positive towards the needs of persons with disabilities. They seek suggestions from them in order to make the government services more inclusive.

Q: What about the community people?

A: The community people are also very cooperative towards persons with disabilities than ever before. Sometime they seek assistance from the persons with disabilities to access to different government and non-government services.

Q: From your years of experience, do you believe that one day persons with disabilities would be equal to persons without disabilities in terms of rights and other opportunities?

A: Absolutely. Since, a number of evidences have already been created that persons with disabilities are enjoying equal rights and opportunities like persons without disabilities.

Thank you, **Yesmin Sultana**.

C-19 Update

As results of the proactive advocacy of the SHGs and the Apex Bodies with the government and non-government authorities, from April 2021 – June 2021, food support was provided with a total of 64 persons with disabilities (M-25, F-39) and hygiene support to a total of 12 persons with disabilities (M-07, F-05). In addition to that, cash support was given to 11 persons with disabilities (M-4, F-07) during this period.

From April 2021 – June 2021, a total of 02 persons (M-01, F-01) have been found contaminated with Coronavirus among the beneficiaries of the PHRPBD project. And, a total of 10 persons with disabilities (M-04, F-06), among the project's beneficiaries, received COVID-19 vaccine during the mentioned period.

“Nobody is good at everything. We all have limitations in our own way which is equally true for persons with disabilities. We all should look at the positive sides of a person with disability.”

– Yesmin Sultana, CDRP



Yesmin Sultana, second from the extreme left, is in a distribution event.

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