



RODDUR Kotha (Stories of Achievements)

**Developed and Published by
Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC)**

**Supported by
Manusher Jonno Foundation**



**মানুষের জন্য
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Introduction

“Reducing the Risks of Disaster through Promotion of Rights and Governance”- to accomplish this long cherished dream, Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation has been implementing a project entitled RODDUR since 2009. The project is being mapped in the areas of Chowhali, Faridpur and Kutubdia Upazila under the Districts of Sirajganj, Faridpur and Cox’s Bazaar respectively. It is being executed to reduce risks through establishment of people’s rights and good governance.

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world due to its geographic location. Every year it is affected by various disasters and the poor are the main sufferers of it. As their rights in accessing services are not yet confirmed, their socio- economic condition is therefore at a standstill. The poor community people suffer from lack of information which deprives them from accessing different services and facilities. According to the constitution of People’s Republic of Bangladesh, people are the source of all power. But the real picture reveals that while the people representatives, who have been entrusted with the duty to provide service to people, are leading a life of ultimate comfort the general people on the other hand are still fighting for their survival.

The development of the poor communities and its people can be ensured through proper distribution of resources and services that has been allotted by the Government. This will allow them to build better defenses against disasters. Now the question is how can we ensure proper utilization of resources and distribution of services? The answer is that people have to be more vigilant about their rights to acquire their demands. People have to ensure their right by themselves. Here the Government’s responsibility is to take proper initiatives to ensure peoples’ participation in utilization of resources.

The major challenge for the RODDUR project is to aware the people of their rights to acquire their services considering the fact our development system is mostly dependent on materialistic methods. But the ray of light is the positive change in the mindset of our people. They now want to be more self sufficient. RODDUR is working on that principle and it has already carved many success stories, some of which are shared with you here.

We hope this book will encourage others who are also working on ensuring people’s rights for the development of the society. If people are ready to fight for their rights and resources and can play an active role in the development of the society then the community will imbue the capacity to reduce the risk of disaster along with its associated damages.

Muhammad Saidur Rahman
Director

Shuvashis Chandra Mahanta
Project Coordinator

Project Learnings

Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC) was established in 1992 as Bangladesh's first independent national NGO focused solely on disaster risk reduction (DRR). BDPC set out to put vulnerable communities at the centre of disaster management, adopting a community-based approach, complemented by advocacy, policy advice and knowledge sharing.

Mission

BDPC aims at reducing the risks of people vulnerable to disasters through empowering them to establish their rights.

Vision

Reduction of loss of life and property caused by natural hazards.

Project Title:

“Reducing the Risk of Disaster through Promotion of Rights and Governance (RRDPRG)” is a project of BDPC supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation.

Goal

The project seeks to reach the goal of promoting rights and governance for managing the risks of disasters facing the poor and the disadvantaged group of people.

Objectives:

The specific objectives of the project are:

- To make the target poor aware of their rights on the services delivered by the government agencies at the local level;
- To develop bargaining and negotiation skills among the target poor so that they can claim their legitimate access to the services and policy benefits delivered by the local government agencies;
- To enable the target poor so that they can participate in the making of institutional decisions and negotiate access to social justice;
- To develop transparent and accountable behaviour among the appointed and the elected officials of the government to make them sensitive and responsive to the needs of the poor vulnerable to natural disaster; and
- To influence policy reforms and directives necessary for delivering the benefits of governance for disaster risk management.

Project Period:

The project started from October 2008 to June 2013.

Intervention areas:

The project is being implemented in the Upazilas of Kutubdia, Faridpur and Chouhali under the districts of Cox's Bazaar, Faridpur and Sirajganj respectively. It covers cyclone, floods and river bank erosion hazards.

Project Approach:

The project is pursuing a participatory bottom-up approach for its replication. Building institutions and local networks are strategically important for creating awareness of rights, building solidarity, and mobilizing claims, voices and support around the transparency and accountability issues of governance that generate benefits and ensure sustainable livelihoods of the poor women and men. The project is also undertaking research to feed grassroots voices into its policy advocacy campaign to be undertaken at the national level and try to change the mindset of key policy and decision makers.

Project Activities:

The major activities that will be implemented during the project period are as follows:

- Insure governance through Community score card and public hearing
- Raising of awareness of basic rights, good governance, disaster preparedness, health and safety net;
- Raising Mass awareness of right issue through cultural program
- Building grassroot institutions for the socioeconomic development of the poor men and women;
- Participatory assessment of community risks that hit the livelihoods of the poor;
- Development of community-based risk reduction plan;
- Capacity enhancement of pressure groups and disaster management committees;
- Production, reproduction and dissemination of IEC materials;
- Mobilisation around different issues of development such as rights and governance for risk reduction and post-disaster response management; and
- Demand mediation for access to services delivered by the local government institutions.

Social Accountability tools implemented by BDPC:

To ensure rights of the people and establishing good governance and accountability in the society, BDPC is implementing various social accountability tools in the project activities. These tools include-

- 1) Community Score Card
- 2) Participatory Selection Process
- 3) Public Hearing Meeting
- 4) Citizen Charter
- 5) Information and Service Fair
- 6) Right to Information

Brief Discussions of these social accountability tools are presented here.

Community Score Card (CSC)

সূচক	সেবাপ্রাপ্ত জনসংখ্যা (১-১০০)	স্বাক্ষরিত জনসংখ্যা (১১-১০০)	স্বাক্ষরিত জনসংখ্যা (১১-১০০)	স্বাক্ষরিত জনসংখ্যা (১১-১০০)	সুপারিশপত্র পর্যালোচনা সময়	সময়কাল	পারিষ্কার
ডিজিটাল সার্ভিস (নিবেশন)	৩০	৪০			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • সঠিক পরিষেবা প্রদানকারী করে আবেদন করা হবে। • সঠিক নথি সংগ্রহ করা হবে। • সঠিক নথি সংগ্রহ করে আবেদন করা হবে। • সঠিক নথি সংগ্রহ করে আবেদন করা হবে। • সঠিক নথি সংগ্রহ করে আবেদন করা হবে। • সঠিক নথি সংগ্রহ করে আবেদন করা হবে। 	৩০ দিনের মধ্যে	সঠিক & পরিষ্কার করে পরিষেবা বিতরণ করা হবে।
সময়কাল ও পরিষেবা	১০	৩০			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। 	৩০ দিনের মধ্যে	সঠিক & পরিষ্কার করে পরিষেবা বিতরণ করা হবে।
পারিষ্কার ও পরিষেবা	৪০	৫০			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। • নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে পরিষেবা প্রদান করা হবে। 	৩০ দিনের মধ্যে	সঠিক & পরিষ্কার করে পরিষেবা বিতরণ করা হবে।

Community Score Card is a modern and effective tool used for ensuring accountability in the society. Many developed countries use this tool for ensuring transparency of Government activities but it is a very new concept in Bangladesh. In this method, the service provider make assessment of their activities and the community also make assessment on the service they have received. Through this process, the service provider find out their problems in providing the service to the community

and try to find out the solution, make work plans and implement the work plan in order to provide the quality service that the community want and make a bridge of relationship with the people.

Objective:

1. Ensuring the participation of the community people in the government development activities

2. Ensuring good governance through establishment of transparency and accountability
3. To increase the quality of the service provided by the service provider
4. Ensuring service for all
5. Establishing a bridge of relationship between the service provider and the community

Participatory Selection Process (PSP)

It is important to know about safety net before knowing about PSP. The activities which are implemented by the Government or other private organizations to ensure the social safety of the people are called the Social Safety Net.

To ensure the food safety, Government is running a programme called VGD which is the largest programme under the Social Safety net Programme. Under this process the ward based selected ultra poor women

receive 30 Kg of rice or wheat for 24 months. These people also get the training from the authorized NGOs to increase their capacity to better their livelihood.



Participatory Selection Process is a system through which the beneficiaries under the Social Safety Net programme of the Government are selected by the presence of all the parties of the community. On 24 December to 26 December, 2012, the PSP was implemented in the selection process of the VGD card members of the 09 wards of Kaiyarbil Union under Kutubdia Upazila. 165 card members were primarily selected for VGD by the presence of the Chairman, member of ward and the elite members of the community.

Issue of the Process:

The issue of this activity was the VGD programme under the Social Safety Net Programme implemented by the Government.

Objective of the Process:

1. To select the real needy people of the community who live their lives under the poverty line.
2. To establish transparency in the process by including the community in the selection process of VGD beneficiaries. As the selection process was organized in front of all the community and was out of the influence of the local Chairman and Members of that community, the selection process was more acceptable to the community.

Implementation Areas:

PSP was implemented in the selection of VGD beneficiaries of the 09 wards of the Kaiyabil Union of Kutubdia Upazila under the district of Cox's Bazar. 165 card members were primarily selected for VGD by the presence of the Chairman, member of ward and the elite members of the community.

Public Hearing Meeting



Public Hearing Meeting is a modern version of social audit system which has become a very popular tool to ensure social accountability. Direct questions and answer sessions are conducted between the beneficiary groups and the service providing organization where the service providers can explain their standings regarding the service to the community people. Here the community gets their opportunity to ask about the mismanagement of the service providers, the quality of the service, differences

between the planning's and the implementation, demands of the community and many other issues related to service of the service providers. It also ensures the accountability of the service providing organizations and also establishes the rights of the people. Public Hearing Meeting helps to reduce the distance between service providers and the beneficiary group.

Objective of the Programme:

1. Ensure increase the standard and quality of the service provided by the service providing organizations through establishing accountability.
2. Making a bridge of relationship between the community people and the service providing organizations.
3. Increase participation and involvement of the community in the information and service process.
4. Establishment of good governance.

Citizen Charter

Citizen Charter is the mutual contract between the Government Service Provider and the service recipient regarding the quality and quantity of the service. It is a descriptive document, prepared in the participation of the community people where it describes what types of service will be given by the service providing organization, how much money will be charged from the people in return of their service, what will be the time duration for providing their service and how and where the people can raise complains if they are deprived of receiving the service.



Objective:

Empowering the people through providing information about their rights so that they can ensure their rights and establishing social accountability of the service providers through the implementation of various mechanisms.

Implementation Areas:

- In chowhali, Sirajganj, Citizen Charter was implemented in Chowhali Upazila Health Complex.

- In Faridpur, Citizen Charter has been implemented in Goldangi Union Health and Family Planning Center, Faridpur Sadar, Faridpur
- In Kutubdia, Citizen Charter has been established in Kaiyarbil Union Health and Family Planning Center, Kutubdia, Cox's Bazaar

Information and Service Fair



“Get Information, get services and reduce your risk of disaster”- was the main theme of Information and service Fair which was arranged by BDPC and funded by Manusher Jonno Foundation. BDPC has organized two Information and Service Fair in Faridpur Sadar Upazila in 2011 and in Kutubdia Upazila in 2012. All the Government Service Providing Departments of respective Upazila participated in the fair informing and promoting their services that they provide to the community. Both the

Information and Service Fairs created huge excitement in the community people and were able to make the people aware about establishing their rights.

Objectives of the Programme:

- To improve the relationship between the service providing organizations and the people
- To ensure people's right to information and service
- To develop a friendly relationship between service providing organizations and the people
- Making service related information open to all.

Training on Right to Information

To ensure rights and good governance in the society, it is important to establish the right to information of the people. The Government of Bangladesh passed the Right to Information Act in 2009. As a part of making the people aware, BDPC is implementing training programmes on Right to Information Act-2009 in the Upazila and Union Level. Upazila Government Officers, Union Parishad Members and the WDPC and Shocheton Dol members of BDPC are being given training on this issue.



Objective of the Programme:

1. Provide an over view of the Right to Information Act-2009
2. To make the Government Officials, Union Parishad Members and the WDPC and Shocheton Dol members to know about Right to Information and make them feel encouraged to distribute the information to the people

BDPC is always committed in the empowerment of the people through its innovative project activities and implementing the social accountability tools. The main objective is to make the community people feel conscious about their rights so they can raise their voice in order to establish their own right and also to improve the relationship between the Government Service Providing Departments and the service recipient. The implementation of the Social Accountability Tools has created significant development in the mind set of the community people and also enforce the Service providers to provide the expected service to the community. The reflection of the positive development in the community has been demonstrated in the following stories.



Executing Right to Information to Ensure Rights by Rafiqul Islam

Md. Rafiqul Islam is a resident of Ward 03 of Lemshikhali Union in Kutubdia Upazila under the district of Cox's Bazaar. He is 43 years old. He was involved in salt business but after the damage inflicted by the 1991 cyclone he was forced to leave this business. At present, he looks after his land and plays voluntary roles in various social welfare activities. When BDPC arranged the sensitization meeting in Lemshikhali Union, Rafiqul Islam was selected as a Change Agent of the Ward 03. After that, he participated in all

the trainings and workshops arranged by BDPC in Kutubdia. Through these trainings, he has learned about Human Rights, Social Accountability, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Right to Information Act-2009 and these have raised his confidence and knowledge. Rafiqul Islam believes he is a conscious person now. We can find the reflection of his self-belief from the story described below.

On the last week of November 2009, Rafiqul Islam came to know that in

Lemshikhali Union, free rice will be distributed from the Government under the VGF Programme on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. He telephoned the PIO (Project Implementation Officer) of Kutubdia to know how much of rice would be allotted to how many people. The PIO refused to divulge the information to which Rafiqul replied that he was aware about the Right to Information Law. He had the right to know about the Government's National Programmes and it was the responsibility of the PIO to let everyone know about it. Then the PIO informed that for Lemshikhali Union, 10 kg of rice would be given to each of the 2725 people.

On the given day, people queued in front of the house of the Chairman.

The people there were informed by the Chairman that each of them will be allotted 7 kg of rice. Rafiqul Islam intervened and informed everyone that the Government had allotted 10 kg of rice to each individual. When the Chairman was confronted he said that everything was being done legally and that the distribution quota was correct. The beneficiaries protested and said that they would not take rice if they are deprived from their due share. In the face of growing protest the Chairman had no option but to agree with them. After discussing with everyone, it was decided that every person would be given 9 kg of rice as some rice got damaged while weighing and during transfer. In this way, Rafiqul Islam was able to establish the right of the people through a collective effort.





Protest against Corruption by Md. Abu Bakar Siddique

Md. Abu Bakar Siddique is the resident of Ward 02 Azim Uddin Para in North 01 Dhurong Union of Kutubdia Upazila under the District of Cox's Bazaar. His father's name is Late Jaan Ali Sikder. His house is located just on the west side of the Azam Road that leads to the north of Dhurong Bazaar. Md. Abu Bakar Siddique, in his fifties, is an educated and a conscious farmer. Due to his involvement in local social welfare activities, the local people looked up to him. He is also a member of North Dhurong's Ward 02 Disaster Preparedness Committee. He has been associated with BDPC's RODDUR Project since the beginning of 2009. Through participation in various trainings and meetings, organized by BDPC, he has come to know about Social Accountability, Disaster Risk Reduction, Good

Governance, Right to Information and other issues. Afterwards, he has implemented his knowledge for establishing social accountability in his practical life as well. The story described below explains the level of his consciousness. The 5.5 km road that runs from Dhurong Bazaar to North Dhurong is a very essential road for the local community, as there are no alternative roads available to reach the Upazila when important tasks are at hand. People have suffered heavily as the road became unusable for a long time. At last in 2010, the repair work for the road started. The mending work for the 5.5 km road was distributed among some contractors. After the repair work started on Azam Road by contractors responsible; Mr. Abu Bakar Siddique questioned the progress of the work.

As he had the knowledge about the Right to Information, he asked one of the contractors to show the planning and design of the road repair work. But when he could not get that from him, he collected those from other contractors.

According to the plan, they were supposed to do 20" box-cutting, but it did not happen. It was planned that there would be 8" layer of sand, 6" layer of Sand and Brick chips and 6" layer of Stone chips but these specifications were not being followed. Instead of using big roller machine for compaction, the contractor was using small roller machine. Abu Baker Siddique along with several concerned community people protested the use of such machines and the contractor was forced to use bigger machines. The contractors used ill practices while laying the pitch of the road. . The contractors under pressure from the protests of the villagers start regular work on the road. Abu Bakar noticed irregularities at every stage of the work and hence he thought that the

matter needed to be addressed with all. He acquired a mike in the village and voiced the details for a meeting and on 29 November, 2010 a meeting was organised to protest against the corruption and irregularities occurring in the repairment work of Azam Road. A huge number of people participated in the protest meeting. The people who gathered in the meeting decided that the repair work had to be done following the proper plans otherwise the work has to be called off. A formal letter was submitted to the Upazila office and district offices of the respective Departments including a letter to the Prime Minister's Office. Later on a responsible Officer came and investigated the whole issue. And it was proved in the investigation that irregularities were present and the work was halted. After 3 months, the repairment work began again following the initial proposed plans and design. Md. Abu Bakar Siddique said, "If people are aware and conscious, then corruption can be removed from the society which is a must for development."



Shahnaz Begum's Initiatives Brought 10 Children the Light of Education

Shahnaz Begum is a 38 year old housewife who has studied till class 10. Her husband Abdus Sattar Chokdar is a HSC graduate and a financially solvent farmer. They have three daughters and one son. She gives top priority to her children's education.

Shahnaz Begum is a resident of West Aliabad Chokdar Dangi Ward 09 of Aliabad Union under Faridpur Sadar Upazila. This village is situated on the bank of Padma River. The distance between her village and the upazila

is around 11 km. Farming is the main source of income for her family.

Shahnaz Begum used to pass her days doing household chores and looking after her family. She did not have much scope to get engaged in any sort of social activities. But when BDPC formed the Ward Committee and Shochetan Dol in that locality, the Local Member and the community people made Shahnaz Begum the Change Agent of that area. After that, she started attending various trainings

organized by BDPC and learnt about Basic Rights, Rights to Receive Services, Good Governance, Citizen Charter and other issues. These initial learning made her curious to know more about these issues. She got her opportunity when BDPC arranged Information and Service Fair where she gathered information on these issues from different government service providing organizations. She came to know from the Primary Education Office stall that admission and books distribution at government schools in Bangladesh are absolutely free. Excited by this news, Shahnaz Begum met with the mothers of those children who were not being sent to schools and told them about the utmost importance of education and how easily it can be accessed in our country.

It was the month of July 2011- middle of the academic year, when the teachers are reluctant to admit new students. Though the guardians were interested in admitting their children,

the teachers were not cooperating. Shahnaz Begum took this matter seriously and discussed it with the educated people of the community and also with the teachers of the school. She quoted the information that she gathered from the Primary Education Department in the Information and Service Fair that it is our responsibility to ensure the education of every children. She insisted that the teachers take these new students otherwise she would go to the Education Department Office to lodge an official complaint. Her persistence persuaded the teachers to admit the students and to make necessary arrangements for the distribution of books at free of cost. Now the children regularly go to school with great joy and excitement.

Shahnaz Begum says, "I get tears of joy when I see children going to schools carrying their books." She informed that so far she has admitted 10 children to schools. If people come forward like this, then no children of our country will be deprived of education.





Free Cattle Medicine and Vaccine Collection by Yead Ali

Mr. Yead Ali is the resident of Khabir Munshi's Dangi of Dikirir Chor under the Upazila of Faridpur Sadar. The Khabir Munshi Dangi is a Chor which emerged within the river Padma. Most people of this area practice farming and animal husbandry for livelihood. There are no roads in this area. There is no transportation available other than horse-pulled carts and boats. It is the only way to transport for moving to and from the city. By profession, Yead Ali is a farmer.

Dikirir Chor is situated in such an area where you need a boat to reach there and that is why the Government Officials do not show much interest in serving the area, so many people like Yead Ali are deprived of getting services from the government. Yead Ali did not know anything about their rights before joining the RODDUR Project. But when BDPC arrived in this Chor area for making the people aware on human rights, this simple man felt the urgency to get involved

with it in order to benefit himself and his community. He first learned about his rights during the first ward based training programme arranged by BDPC. He understood what his rights were and how much he could claim. Since then, he has been attending various events arranged by BDPC and is determined to empower himself.

One day, Yead Ali went to Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department Office to collect free medicines and vaccines. Because he learned from the trainings of BDPC that there is provision of distributing free medicines to the poor people by the Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department. He was informed by a member that the Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department provides free medicines and services to the people. So when there was a requirement for vaccines and medicines for his and his neighbor's cows, he went to the office. When he arrived at the office, the Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department Officer was out of office. Then he asked other officials and personnel of the office for medicine and vaccines. Everyone in the office was astonished as Yead Ali came for

the medicines and vaccines without bringing money. They refused to give the medicines without money. Yead Ali decided that he will talk to the Livestock Officer when he returns. Other employees told him to leave the office but Yead Ali waited for 3-4 hours. Sensing his desperation, the officials suggested him to purchase medicines by whatever amount he had in his pocket. But Yead Ali kept waiting for the Officer to return. He thought that it is his right to get the medicines. When the Officer returned, Yead Ali was making his way to the officer's room but the other employees requested Yead Ali not to talk about this matter with the Officer. They offered him to take whatever medicines he required at free of cost. Then Yead Ali took those medicines and fulfilled his and his neighbor's needs.

Now Yead Ali is more conscious about his rights and enlightens others on establishing those rights. He is determined in his goal and committed to serve the people. The villagers like him a lot and share their problems with him. He provides suggestions, advices and helps them to solve their problems.



Khaimuddin's Self Belief and Receiving Service without Bribe

Khaimuddin is a resident of Chouddoroshi Village, Ward 06 of Khash Kawlia Union in Chowhali Upazila under the District of Sirajganj. 65 years old Khaimuddin is a farmer by profession. The village is very near to the Upazila town. It is located near to the Jamuna River and the area is badly affected by river bank erosions. Though he is a farmer, he does not practice farming that much. He has a lot of land under his name. His sons

stay abroad. So he has opportunity to spend leisure time. He is leading a comfortable life with 3 sons and 3 daughters. He is always helpful and supportive in community problems.

He was selected as a Change Agent in the sensitization meeting of RODDUR project arranged by BDPC. Although he visited the Upazila Town often, Khaimuddin had little idea about government services. He attended

training and workshops organized by BDPC where he came to know about Disaster Risk Reduction, Human Rights, Good Governance, Rights to Information, Service Providing Organizations- their services and other issues.

As a land owner, Khaimuddin needed to go to Upazila Registry Office for many land related matters. In December 2009, he purchased a land and to register that, he went to Upazila Registry Office in January, 2010. An official of the Registry Office demanded extra amount which is more than the usual registration fee. Khaimuddin asked the officer to explain why the extra amount is needed. The official told him that it is as per the rules. Khaimuddin

protested and told the official quite specifically that he has to explain why the extra amount is required and he requested the official to provide a receipt stating the extra amount. He said it is his right to know such information. Khaimuddin's confidence and protesting voice put fear in the official and he did all the formalities for registering the land without taking the extra money he initially asked for.

Now-a-days Khaimuddin receives all services at officially stated prices and does not pay extra. Khaimuddin said, "Now I am aware about my rights. I am confident about my rights because I have the right information. That's why I say that acquire information and get your own rights."





Receiving Treatment According to Citizen Charter by Protesting and Imprisoning the Doctors in the Hospital

Chowhali is an upazila located on the bank of Jamuna River in the district of Sirajgonj. Regular flooding and frequent river bank erosion are common problems of this area. These problems hamper proper education and health care in the area. To alleviate the sufferings of the people of Chowhali, BDPC with the support of MJF is implementing RRDPRG Project in Chowhali Upazila. In relation to that, on 26 September, 2012, BDPC

organized the opening ceremony of the Citizen Charter of Chowhali Health Complex. Around 400 people attended the opening ceremony. The Upazila Chairman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, Upazila Family Planning Officer, Union Chairman and leaders from different political parties were present. At the beginning of the ceremony, the speakers discussed about the issues surrounding Citizen

Charter including its objectives and services entitled to people. After that the community people, administrators and political leaders spoke about the problems of the Health Complex and how to solve them. They also discussed about probable responsibilities that the administrators, community people and the political leaders would have if the services were not provided from the Upazila Health Complex according to the Citizen Charter.

On 30 September, 2012, an 8 year old child was injured accidentally as a fishing hook pierced his lip. On the same day a 45 year old woman accidentally cut her hand. Both of them came to hospital for treatment but found the Emergency Department locked. They then tried to communicate with the Resident Doctor and the Medical Officer as the on-duty Medical Assistant of the Emergency Department was not present at the hospital either. The

relative of the patients and the local people got furious as the emergency department was left unattended. They said that, the Emergency Department should be kept open for 24 hours according to the Citizen Charter as only few days back on 26 September, 2012, the authorities of the hospital had promised to give the people the best services. The local people imprisoned the Resident Doctor and the Medical Officer of the hospital and demonstrated a procession around the hospital. Later on, the Local Community Administrator and other Officers assembled at the hospital and requested to free the doctors. They assured full cooperation and promised the people that such an incident would not repeat in the future. The local people said that, Citizen Charter has helped them to realize their rights and now they were more aware and conscious about establishing their rights.



Nasir Uddin's Farmers Assembly

Md. Nasir Uddin is the eldest son of a poor farmer Mr. Abu Syed. He has two brothers and three sisters. Nasir Uddin lives in Goni Hokdar Para of South Dhurang Union in Upazila of Kutubdia under the disaster-prone district of Cox's Bazaar. Nasir Uddin is 30 years old and is a married man. He is a small businessman by profession. Most of the people of his area are poor farmers, fishermen and salt farmers. Due to lack of awareness in the community, the people do not seek any assistance from government service providing organizations. In January 2009, he was selected by the people as a Change Agent at the sensitization meeting of BDPC's RODDUR Project.

He came to know about different service providing departments' activities in the Upazila through programmes arranged by BDPC. The programmes also enlightened him on peoples' right to access services from such organizations. He realized that it was an imprudent practice for farmers to seek suggestions and advices on pesticides and fertilizers from dealers. Instead he thought it would be more beneficial for farmers to seek advice and suggestion from agriculture specialists.

He thought of arranging a discussion meeting between the farmers and an Agricultural Officer so that

many farmers would be able to gain information regarding farming.

He contacted the Upazila Agriculture Office and shared his plan with the Agricultural Officer Mr. Abul Kashem Dhali. Mr. Dhali welcomed this initiative and assured him of all possible support. He assured that he would direct the responsible officer of that area to cooperate with him in this task. After getting the assurance from the officer, Nasir Uddin discussed the matter with all the farmers of the area. Everyone responded to his initiative and on 17 March, 2010 the meeting was organized in the field of South Dhurangh Nuraini Madrasa. In the presence of the Deputy Agriculture Officer Mr. Nejam Uddin, the farmers presented their problems related to agriculture. The officer carefully

listened and analyzed their problems and gave informative and effective suggestions to them. He even wrote a few lessons for the farmers. The officer was pleased to offer his advice to so many farmers at the same time and gave his word that he will give advice to farmers on a regular basis from now on. Expressing his gratitude, the officer said "I am happy that I could give my advice to so many farmers at the same time. From now on I will be available for such occasions." The farmers were also very satisfied to get information from an experienced person.

Due to Nasir Uddin's initiative, now the people are holding regular advisory meetings and the farmers are getting the opportunity to share and learn on different aspects of agriculture.



Expedition against Corruption by Noorjahan Begum

The village named Majid Matobbor Dangi is situated in Ward 04 of North Channel Union of Upazila (Sadar) under the District of Faridpur. The whole Dangi is located on the bank of Padma River. Most of the people of this area are farmers and day laborers. The village is located 20-25 km away from the main city. Transportation is done on foot, by boats or horse pulled carts. Noorjahan Begum is 42 years old. She is a housewife and a social worker. She has two sons and a daughter. Both of his sons live abroad while her daughter is married. Her family runs on land cultivation and foreign remittance. Noorjahan Begum is a member of the Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee since it was formed in the ward.

In June 2010, a Public Hearing Meeting was organized in Faridpur under the

RODDUR Project which she attended. There she came to know on various services from the Heads of different Service Providing Organizations.

Now, Noorjaan Begum is more confident than before. As an example, a 40-day project was supposed to start in her area. Some higher officials and people from the local parties involved with the project wanted to give jobs to forty laborers and said whoever gives them money will get. When Noorjaan Begum heard about it she gathered all the women of the area and convinced them not to give any money. Thus started a revolution of not paying any money to get jobs. Given the situation, the officials had no options but to give jobs. All the women who got jobs praised Noorjahan Begum and they said that fighting for the truth and winning posses great satisfaction.



Hasina Begum's Awareness Ensured the Treatment of her Sister-in-Law



Hasina Begum is a permanent resident of Ward 04 of Karim Sikder Para of South Dhurong Union in Kutubdia Upazila under the District of Cox's Bazaar. She is a Change Agent of BDPC in her area and by profession a housewife.

On 04 and 05 April, 2012, BDPC arranged the Information and Service Fair with support from MJF in Kutubdia. In this fair, Hasina Begum came to know about different service providing organizations, their activities and their services. In that fair, Officers from different organizations promised to give the people of Kutubdia their best services.

On 06 July, 2012, Hasina Begum's sister-in-law, Mahbuba Islam (Anika) suffered heavily from diarrhea. Hasina Begum immediately took her to the Kutubdia Govt. Medical Hospital and

got her admitted there. The doctors prescribed six bags of saline and instructed the nurse to push few injections to the patient. The on-duty nurse asked money for the medicines from Hasina Begum.

But Hasina Begum refused to give any money to the nurse and started protesting as the nurse kept asking for the money. She said to the nurse that from the Information and Service Fair, she had come to know that Government Service Providing Organizations give services free of cost and the Health Officers had given their commitments for ensuring free services to the people. Hasina Begum threatened to go to the THO or UNO to make a complaint if the nurse does not provide free medicines. The ignorant nurse kept on demanding money from her and at one point Hasina Begum decided to go to the THO. Fearing consequences, the nurse stopped her and requested her not to lodge any complaint. The nurse then gave the patient medicines and services free of cost. The patient was admitted for 4 days in the hospital and Hasina Begum did not have to pay a penny for it. Hasina Begum said BDPC and its Information and Service Fair has given them the strength to fight for their rights. "I got the service that I needed." She added if people continue to ignore their rights then they will be deprived from the services they are entitled to receive.

ইউনিয়ন স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ কেন্দ্রের নাগরিক সনদ

"দুটি সন্ধানের বেশি নয়, একটি হলো ভাল হয়"

কৈয়ামাবিল, কুতুবদিয়া, কক্সবাজার

স্বাস্থ্যের স্বপ্ন।

কিন্তু নদী কিম্বা বিপদে এ স্বপ্নের রূপ নেই।
কিন্তু কখনো কখনো স্বপ্ন হয়।

স্বাস্থ্যের উদ্দেশ্য।

- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে নিয়মিত পরামর্শের পরিষেবা প্রদান করা।
- জনস্বাস্থ্যের উন্নয়ন।
- জনস্বাস্থ্যের উন্নয়ন।

মুখ্য বিষয়।

এই পরিষদ থেকে বৃহৎসংখ্যক সনদ ৯০০ থেকে ২০০০ টির মধ্যে স্বাক্ষর করা হবে।

আমরা নিম্নোক্ত সেবাগুলো প্রদান করে থাকি।

(ক) স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

- গর্ভসূচী সেবা
 - গর্ভসূচী রিপোর্ট সেবা
 - গর্ভসূচী সেবা
 - এম আর সেবা
 - মনস্তাত্ত্বিক সেবা
 - ২ বছরের কম বয়সী শিশুর সেবা
 - প্রজননস্বাস্থ্য/ঔষধবিহীন সেবা
 - ইন্টিগ্রাল সেবা
 - পরিবেশিক ও স্বাস্থ্য উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী
 - স্বাস্থ্য সেবার উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী
- #### (খ) পরিবার পরিচরিত সেবা (কিন্ডার্স)
- পরিবার পরিচরিত সেবা প্রদান করা
 - মনস্তাত্ত্বিক
 - গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী ইন্টিগ্রাল
 - গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
 - গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
 - পরিবার পরিচরিত সেবা/গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী
 - পরিবার পরিচরিত সেবা/গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী
 - ইন্টিগ্রাল (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)

(গ) স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স) ১০ (দশ) টাকার ১০ (দশ) মিনিউট সেবা।
- পরিবার পরিচরিত সেবা/গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)
- গর্ভসূচী/গর্ভসূচী (স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর)

(ঘ) স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)
- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)
- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

(ঙ) স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)
- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

(চ) স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

- স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তরে (কিন্ডার্স)

মুখ্য বিষয় পরিদপ্তর সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষমতা।

সেবা	সীমা	সীমা
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০

গর্ভসূচী সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষমতা পরিদপ্তর থেকে প্রদান করা হবে।

সেবা	সীমা	সীমা
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০

গর্ভসূচী সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষমতা পরিদপ্তর থেকে প্রদান করা হবে।

সেবা	সীমা	সীমা
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০

গর্ভসূচী সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষমতা পরিদপ্তর থেকে প্রদান করা হবে।

সেবা	সীমা	সীমা
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০

গর্ভসূচী সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষমতা পরিদপ্তর থেকে প্রদান করা হবে।

সেবা	সীমা	সীমা
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০
গর্ভসূচী সেবা	১০০০	১০০০

গর্ভসূচী সেবা প্রদানের ক্ষমতা পরিদপ্তর থেকে প্রদান করা হবে।

এছাড়াও নির্ধারিত কেন্দ্রে জনস্বাস্থ্য সেবা/স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর সেবা প্রদান করা হয়ে থাকে।



স্বাস্থ্য পরিদপ্তর

Citizen Charter- The New Light of Hope in Establishing the Rights of the People

Kutubdia is sea enclosed island under the District of Cox's Bazaar. The devastating 1991 cyclone wiped away 20,000 lives. After the disaster, the Government of Bangladesh and various other organizations came forward to bring normalcy in the lives of those affected. The government organizations pledged to give full support as per government rules. But it is unfortunate that the services and rules have been seldom exercised in reality. The services provided by different organizations falls below

expectations, especially the role of Health and Family Planning Centre in particular has been disappointing. To remove these sufferings and to ensure the rights of the people, BDPC is implementing RRDPRG Project with the support of MJF in Kutubdia. In relation to that, on 03 September, 2012, BDPC organized the Opening Ceremony of the Citizen Charter of Kaiyabil Union Health and Family Planning Center. Around 500 people attended that Opening Ceremony. Kutubdia Upazila Chairman, Upazila

Nirbahi Officer, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, Upazila Family Planning Officer, Headmaster of Kaiyabil Ideal High School, Inspector of Kaiyabil Union Health and Family Planning Center and Union Chairman were present as guests in the function. At the beginning of the ceremony, the speakers discussed about the issues centering Citizen Charter like - its objectives and services entitled to people. Then the UNO asked the audience if they ever had to pay money or face any hassle while acquiring services from the Health and Family Planning Office. All the community people present there started showing their grievances against this office. At one stage, the UNO himself had to calm the people down. Then the UNO asked for explanations from the HTO officers regarding this matter. The people got agitated as soon as the officers started to speak. Then the UNO said to the people that "if

any officer asks for bribe, then you can directly complain to me and I will take immediate action". The UNO gave his personal mobile number to the audience and said that they can call him anytime regarding this issue. He said to the Officers that it is the right of these people to receive services from us. All the Officers, Upazila Chairman, UP Chairman also gave commitment that if any sort of complaint arises regarding poor services then they will also take actions instantly. The crowd applauded in appreciation. After the ceremony, people said that Citizen Charter will play an important role in establishing their rights. If today's commitments are not fulfilled in future then we will form strong protest against it. People coming from other Unions said that it is important to start Citizen Charter in all the Unions as well. People said that the Citizen Charter is the new light of hope in ensuring the rights of general people.



Establishing Rights by Nazma Begum

Class Eight graduate Nazma Begum, is a mother of 2 children. She is 35 years old. Her son is a service holder and she is leading a comfortable life by using her own land for cultivation. Though Chowhali is 12km from the Sadar, she still travels to the Upazila quite regularly. Nazma Begum is an elected member of Baghutia Union Parishad. Her village name is Rehai Pukuria. She is a member of respective Ward's Disaster Preparedness Committee under the RODDUR Project. From the beginning of the project, she enthusiastically attended most of the programmes. Through these events, she learned about her rights, good

governance, and other issues. As an elected UP member, she is focusing hard on the establishment of peoples' rights.

An allowance is given to poor pregnant women from the Women Department. To claim that allowance one needs to first have a certificate from her doctor certifying her pregnancy. One woman from Nazma Begum's village named Asma was in need of such a certificate. When Asma contacted Nazma Begum, she suggested her to collect the certificate from the hospital. According to her suggestion, Asma went to the hospital and asked the on duty doctor to give the

certificate, but the doctor refused to give the certificate without money and demanded Tk 100 for this. But the woman refused to give the money and left the hospital. She then shared this with Nazma Begum who then went to hospital and asked the doctor to give the certificate. Again the doctor demanded money from her. This time Nazma Begum said, "I will give you the money if you give me in writing that to get this certificate, Tk 100 is required." But the doctor denied to

provide any such written statement. When Nazma Begum told him that she will complaint about it to the UNO, the on duty doctor said that it is not necessary to do so and gave her the certificate. Through this way, Nazma Begum collected the certificate and suggested everyone not to provide any money for collecting this certificate. In this way, Nazma Begum is working as a leader for the establishment of the rights for herself and for the people of her village.





Salma Begum Ensured her Rights on the Opening of the Citizen Charter

The 03 number North Channel Union of Sadar Upazila is situated on the bank of river Padma under the District of Faridpur. Flood and river bank erosion are common problems of this area. Frequent flood and bank erosions causes obstruction in every development work especially in health care and education sectors. To alleviate the sufferings of the people here, BDPC with the support of MJF is implementing RRDPGRG Project in Sadar Upazila. As a part of this initiative, on 16 September 2012, BDPC organized an Inauguration programme for the Citizen Charter of Goldangi Union Health and Family Planning Center. Around 300 people attended that Opening

Ceremony. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, Upazila Health and Family Planning Inspector, Union Chairman and leaders from different political parties were present. At the inauguration, the speakers discussed about the Citizen Charter, what are its objectives and explained which services are the rights of the people. Afterwards the community people, administrators, and political leaders discussed the problems of the Health Center and ways to solve it. They also discussed the responsibilities of the administrators, community people and the political leaders when services are not provided by the Union Health and Family Planning Center

according to the Citizen Charter. While the UNO was delivering his speech, a lady named Salma Begum (resident of Aser Uddin Matbor Dangi and wife of Abu Bakkar) bravely got up to the stage.

In presence of higher officials and authorities she complained that she did not receive good services from the Family Planning Centre after a ligation was performed on her a year ago.

She said she was in extreme pain after the ligation and therefore went to meet Dr. Yusuf Ali at the Family Planning Centre. Unfortunately she did not receive adequate help from there. She then went to the General Hospital but there also cooperation and services eluded her. Hearing her story, the general audience got agitated and demanded for justice. The

UNO and the Family Planning Officer reacted immediately and asked the on-duty doctor, Yusuf Ali to urgently arrange treatment for Salma Begum. The UNO strongly cautioned that if any irregularity or complaint is found against anyone, then firm actions will be taken against the accused. After the conclusion of the function, Dr. Yusuf met Salma Begum and carefully examined her condition and assured her of best possible treatment.

Salma Begum said “until now whenever we talked about our problems and complications we never got enough cooperation from them but today they have given great respect and importance to our sufferings.” She also said that Citizen Charter will play a key role in ensuring the rights of women in the society.



The Intelligence of Rokeya Saved the life of a Mother and her Child



Poran Sikder Para is a Village under Ward 07 of Koiyabil Union of Kutubdia Upazila under the Cox's Bazaar District. Rokeya Begum is a permanent resident of that village. She is a very simple woman but she has great interest in working for the welfare of the local community. She does not care if its day or night when she goes to serve pregnant women. Whoever asks her for help, she never disappoints anyone. To provide help and serve pregnant women is the main motto of her life. It has been almost 20-25 years that Rokeya is serving her community as a traditional birth attendant (TBA). She has encountered lots of difficulties and problems while performing her duties. The problems mainly occurred as she did not receive any professional training on safeChild delivery.

On May 28, 2012, BDPC arranged a 3 day long training course in Kutubdia for the TBAs on 'Safe Delivery' with the support of MJF where 25 traditional birth attendants received training.

Begum Rokeya was among those 25 TBAs. She completed the training course very successfully.

It is story of 06 July, 2012. Around 11.30 pm, Rokeya Begum was called for her services at a house in her local area of Poran Sikder Para. After reaching there, she tried to identify 5 danger signs of the pregnant woman. She realized that the woman was in serious danger. She informed the family that the patient needs to be taken to the hospital for the delivery purpose as it needed professional medical handling.

Since it was late at night, the family waited and went to Kutubdia Hospital very early in the morning. But the hospital authority referred the patient either to Cox's Bazaar Bazaar Sadar Hospital or Chittagong Hospital as the situation of the patient was very critical and the Kutubdia Hospital did not have adequate facilities for a cesarean delivery. Rokeya Begum insisted the family to go to Chittagong and the patient was later admitted to Chittagong CMH Hospital. The operation was finally done successfully at 12:30 pm. At present, both the mother and child are safe and keeping well.

Rokeya Begum said that, after the training programme, she has come to know about the 5 danger signs during the pregnancy of a woman and that is why she has been able to save those two lives. She also mentioned that she made a commitment to save the lives of mothers and children at the training programme of BDPC.



Farmer's Meeting Organized by Bazlul Karim

Moulana Bazlul Karim is the resident of Ward 07 of South Dhurang Union of Kutubdia Upazila under the District of Cox's Bazaar. His village name is Dhurang Kacha Gram. He is working as an Imam of the mosque and is also involved with small enterprises. He is unmarried and is 28 years old. His father's name is Late Moulana Muhammad Ullah. He is third among 5 brothers and a sister.

Moulana Bazlul Karim is a Change Agent of BDPC's RODDUR project. He is associated with the project since its inception. In early 2009 when BDPC organized a sensitization meeting in his Ward, he attended the meeting

and was selected as a Change Agent through everyone's consent. He attended a number of trainings and workshops arranged by BDPC and gathered good knowledge on issues like Disaster Risk Reduction, Social Accountability, Good Governance, Rights to Information and many more. As the result, he is now a competent leader in many social activities.

On 06 October, 2010, a coordination meeting of the Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee was held in his Ward. Everyone present in the meeting discussed about the agriculture related problems of the area. After the discussion, it

was decided they will arrange a Farmer's Meeting in the area to discuss about the problems related to farming and agriculture in the locality. According to the decision, Bazlul Karim communicated with the Upazila Agriculture Department to organize the Farmer's Meeting. On the scheduled date (20 October, 2010), he asked all the farmers of his area to be present at Ifad Killa. On that day almost 200 farmers gathered at the meeting place. Some farmers attended the meeting carrying their insect infested plants. Upazila Assistant Agriculture Officer Mr. Md. Mizanur Rahman provided suggestions and

advised them on the problems that the farmers presented to him. He also distributed the Leaf Color Chart (LCC) among them. The Officer gave his mobile phone number to the farmers so that they can contact him regarding any further agriculture related issue. Due to this accessibility, the farmers can now communicate with the Upazila Agriculture Department regarding their problems much more easily.

Bazlul Karim said, "We are highly benefited by this arrangement. Especially through LCC, we now know how to use fertilizers and pesticides properly."



“Getting Service from the Government Offices is Not Our LUCK, It’s Our RIGHT”

Khas Pukuria is a Union of Chowhali Upazila under the District of Sirajganj. Md. Sultan Mahmud lives in Ward 02 of West Kodalia Village of Khas Pukuria Union. He is 48 years old and by profession a teacher. He is living a relaxed life with 1 son and 1 daughter. Though the village is not at the bank of the river it is still 10 km away from the Upazila. The people are mindful and the communication system is quite good here. He is working as a Change Agent from the beginning of the RODDUR Project. From a training programme in 2009; he came to know about the Right to Information. Sultan Mahmud feels that after getting the knowledge of Right to Information, he has become more aware of his rights than before. We can see the reflection of it from the event presented here.

As a Madrasa teacher, every month he has to take the UNO's signature before he can collect his salary. Every month when he goes to the UNO

Office, the Office Assistant demands Tk 100 from him. He has given him money twice or thrice before. But after he learned about the Right to Information Act-2009, he decided not to give any extra money. Later in November, 2009, when he again went to the UNO Office, he refused to give Tk 100. Sultan Mahmud insisted for a clear explanation to why he should pay the extra amount. The officer replied that it was according to the rules to which Sultan said he will give that 100 taka as loan only. He persisted with his decision and eventually completed his work of passing the bill without giving any extra amount to anyone.

Sultan Mahmud said, “Now I try to make others aware in these matters. My neighbors request me to go to the Government Offices with them. I tell them that Getting Service from the Government Offices is not an opportunity, it's our Right!”





Rally on Usage of Sanitary Latrine initiated by Imrul Kayes

Imrul Kayes is a resident of Ali Akbar Dale Union's Ward 06 in Kutubdia Upazila of Cox's Bazaar District. Imrul is 18 years old and a 2nd year student of HSC. He was selected as a Change Agent in the sensitization meeting of RODDUR project organized by BDPC. Then he participated in different trainings and workshops of RODDUR Project arranged by BDPC in Kutubdia. From these trainings he gained knowledge on Disaster Risk reduction, Social Accountability, Human Rights, Good Governance Right to Information and other issues. After learning these

issues, he realized his responsibilities towards his society. He noticed that most people of the community are illiterate and they do not use sanitary latrine which is safe for both health and the environment. He raised this matter at the coordination meeting of the Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee for discussion. Realizing the importance of the subject, the Committee decided that they will take an initiative to organize a programme to aware the people on this matter. They took a decision to hold a rally. Then Kayes, with other Change

Agents started disseminating the news of the rally and invited everyone in the community to attend the rally. Then on 13 May, 2010 the first rally was arranged. Hundreds of people attended the rally. Awareness and informative placards were carried and displayed in the rally to make the community people conscious. Starting from Sandhipi Para, the rally moved across the Shanti Bazaar and Ali Akber Dayle Launch Terminal before coming back to Sandhipi Para.

The rally generated interest and excitement among the community and everyone took it quite positively.

Seeing the response and the interest of the people, Imrul Kayes expressed his willingness to be more engaged in such activities in the future. Meanwhile many people after being enlightened from the rally have contacted the Upazila Health Engineering Department and installed hygienic latrine systems in their houses.

Imrul is still continuing his public awareness activities in his locality. Kayes says "I feel lucky to work for the welfare of the society besides my education. Please pray for me so that I can continue my activities for the welfare of the community."





Repair Work of Village Roads Initiated by Faizul Aziz

Lemshikhali Union is situated in the middle of the sea and is a daughter Island to Kutubdia. Most of the people of this area are associated with salt farming. The link road of the Union with the Upazila is badly damaged which creates great suffering for the community. Faizul Aziz is a resident of the village named Peyarakata of this Union. By profession, he is a teacher in a private school. He is also a Change Agent of RODDUR Project.

In his area, the road towards Mirakhali is very essential to the commuters. But this road became unusable for transportation due to which regular trading of salt and other essentials were badly hindered. To repair the road, an application was submitted to LGED Office but no initiatives were taken from their side. As nothing was being done, Faizul took the responsibility to repair the road on

himself. He sat in a discussion meeting with the community people in January, 2010. He shared his idea of repairing all important roads with everyone's financial support and cooperation. To his plea everyone consented instantly. People from different classes and professions came under the leadership of Faizul and soon they amassed 150,000 taka. Then in February 2010, he made the necessary arrangements for mending the roads. Now the road plays a vital role in maintaining communication with other areas and trading and transportation has become much more feasible and financially profitable. This showed that a noble initiative can be executed successfully if the people join hands without the need of any government's assistance. Besides teaching, now Faizul Aziz is also engaged in many social welfare activities like cattle vaccination and etc.

Jahangir Azad's Rally and Discussion Meeting against Dowry

Jahangir Azad lives in Shahrum Shikodjarpara Village which is in South Dhurong Union of Kutubdia Upazila under the District of Cox's Bazaar. He has a big family with his father, mother, 4 brothers and 5 sisters. Most of the people of this area are illiterate unlike Jahangir who has passed his HSC. They have no idea on the issue of family planning. Most of the people are involved with fishing in the sea and salt farming. In this society, dowry system has become a major issue. Generally, marriage is instituted within the area only. Due to the severity of dowry, a girl's marriage

is her father's doomsday. Jahangir is associated with Women and Children Department as a Field Worker and is also associated with RODDUR project as a Change Agent. In 2010, under the RODDUR project a Social Risk Assessment Programme was initiated where the participant identified the dowry as one of the most risky hazards in the society. Jahangir was also one of the participants.

He realized that dowry system has infested the roots of the society. So to eliminate the dowry culture, it is important to make the community



understand the ill effects of it by inciting their consciousness and good-sense. Jahangir Azad presented this issue in the Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee's meeting and discussed about his plan to arrange an anti- dowry rally and an open discussion programme. In that meeting the decision was made that a rally will be organized with the support of all whom envisions a dowry free society.

On 27 April, 2010, a rally was arranged

where all classes and professions of people responded to Jahangir's plea and attended the rally. After the rally, an open discussion was organized to remove dowry from society. Many people became conscious after that rally and discussion programme and promised that they will never receive or give dowry in future. Ever since then, he has been arranging many backyard discussion programs to increase the awareness in the society against dowry.

Social Initiative by Sumon Khan

Ghorjaan Union's Ward 03 is an area just beside the Jamuna River and the river bank erosion is a common scene here. Sumon Khan is a resident of this area. He is a 28 year old energetic young man. As a Social Worker, he has earned good reputation in his locality. In 2009, he was selected as the Change Agent of the Ward's Disaster Preparedness Committee of BDPC's RODDUR Project. He has worked quite actively in various programmes of the project. He has the willingness to use his knowledge and experience achieved from the project in his practical life as well.

Just before the Monsoon of 2010, the river bank erosion took a devastating turn. A school, a madrasa and a

mosque were located at the bank of the river. The rate of river bank erosion was so appalling that it could have inundated the whole school, madrasa and mosque in a matter of few days. Sumon then took the initiative to arrange an emergency meeting with all the members of Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee. In accordance to the decisions of the meeting, all members decided to work voluntarily to shift the premises to the nearest safest place. Seeing their efforts, all the villagers came forward, extending their hand for support. And through this united effort, all the institutions were moved to a safer area. Because of this initiative, the social institutions were saved from a catastrophe.





Tree Plantation Initiative by Mosleh Uddin

Mosleh Uddin lives in Ghilachari Village, under Kaiyabil Union of Kutubdia Upazila in the District of Cox's Bazaar. He is working in a private organization. Besides that, he also runs a pharmacy. He is a responsible social person. His father's name is Late Abdus Samad and his mother name is Late Mosura Begum. Mosleh Uddin is a Graduate and also a father to a son.

Mosleh Uddin is a Change Agent of RODDUR Project monitored by BDPC. He has been associated with it since its inception. In 2009 he was selected as the Change Agent of RODDUR Project. After that, he attended many training programmes and seminars organized by BDPC and got to know about issues like Disaster Risk Reduction, Social Accountability, Good Governance, Right to Information and many more things. To reduce the risk of disaster, Mr Mosleh Uddin and the other members of Ward

Disaster Preparedness Committee took many initiatives for the villagers. As a conscious person, he thinks it is his responsibility to undertake these initiatives.

On 19 October, 2010 Mosleh Uddin attended the Coordination Meeting of Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee. In this meeting, from their own responsibilities and consciousness, all the members took the decision of tree plantation along the sides of the road. After a whole hearted effort, Tk 2000 was gathered to purchase the plants and around 200 trees were planted along the side of the half kilometer road. Thus Mosleh Uddin contributed in reducing the risk of disaster with the support and cooperation of the community people. It is regarded as one of the brightest examples in Kutubdia. He said, "Trees help us in many ways. It is our best friend to protect our environment. It is a very good place to invest in as well. So we planted these trees."



Cattle Vaccination Programme organized by Kamal Uddin

Kamal Uddin lives in the Village of Ghilachari in Kaiyabil Union; situated in Kutubdia Upazila of Cox's Bazaar District. Kaiyabil is situated in the center of Kutubdia Island. Most of the people of this area are associated with agriculture and salt farming. Kamal is a farmer by profession. He also runs a small business as well. Kamal is 56, lives with his wife and 5 sons. Late Mr. Ali Miah was his father.

In 2009, when RODDUR project started, the villagers made him a member of Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee in the sensitization meeting. After that, he has regularly participated in different

programmes under the project organized by BDPC. Through these programme, he acquired information on Rights, Good Governance and Social Accountability along with relief for disaster struck victims and responsibilities of Service Providing Organizations in Disaster Risk Reduction.

Many people of Ghilachari have cattle in their houses. But due to lack of veterinary support, they are incurring huge losses. Many cows and goats have died from different diseases. Like many other villagers, Kamal is also aware of Upazila Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department, but



never felt it important to go there for any suggestion or service. In the beginning of 2010, he attended a training programme organized by Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee under the RODDUR project where he came to know that Upazila Livestock Department arranges vaccination programme for household cattle each year. A few days after the training programme, he contacted Mr. Morshed Alam, Official of Upazila Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department to get his cattle vaccinated. He came to know that 100 cows can be immunized with one vaccine vial. After getting the information, Kamal Uddin decided to compile a list of all villagers who own a cow and asked them to gather with their cows at one particular place on a specific date so that maximum number of cows could be vaccinated at a minimum cost.

According to the plan, he made a list of all those villagers with the support of the project's Change Agent in

that ward, Mosleh Uddin. In June, 2010 he shared his plan with the Upazila Livestock Department but the Officials informed that they do not have sufficient stock of vaccine and whenever they do have they will let him know. Kamal Uddin was in regular touch with the department and after around 3 months, he went to Upazila Livestock Department Office again. This time the officials said that they do not have electric connection in their office to facilitate any treatment for limb disease. Then he went to Cox's Bazaar to the higher authority of the respective department and informed him on this issue. Later, he visited the Upazila Livestock Officer and the officer ensured him that vaccination will be provided and asked him to make preparations for his scheduled plan.

Then on 17 October, 2010, Kamal Uddin gathered more than 100 cows of the village in Ghilachari Government Primary School ground where an officer provided the vaccine. The people of that community came to know about the Upazila Livestock Department and its services because of the initiative Kamal Uddin took and after that they maintained regular contact to acquire further services from that department. Kamal Uddin said- "I became conscious and aware of my rights after getting training from BDPC. Now I maintain regular contact with different departments for acquiring my services. My aim is to make the people of the village more vigilant. I want to contribute more for the welfare of my community people."



“Cultivating Vegetable is Profitable for our Village”

Tara Banu lives in Ward 06 of Khash Kawlia Union of Chowhali Upazila under Sirajganj District. She is 38 and a housewife. The resident of Chouddorashi Village, Tara Banu is the mother of 3 sons and a daughter. The village is located along the bank of Jamuna River and is also situated very close to the Upazila Town. This village gets badly damaged by floods and river bank erosion each year. Tara Banu was not much aware about disaster preparedness. For the RODDUR project, when the ward's awareness team was formed, the Member of the Ward and a couple of

Change Agents listed her name in that team. Tara Banu along with her team attended much training and workshops organized by the project and gained valuable information. Other than these, she also maintained regular contact with the Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee and the Change Agents.

Through the project, she learned a lot regarding the preparedness for and post disaster procedures . With the support of the project she was encouraged to plant trees around her household.

At first, Tara Banu planted a bottle gourd (lau) tree in her backyard and she was able to sell few bottle gourds in the market after fulfilling the vegetable demand of her family.

Later on, she planted two more bottle gourd trees and made a vegetable garden in the surrounding of her house. Tara Banu has now become economically solvent by selling vegetables in the market. There was a time when she needed to buy vegetables from the market and sometimes she did not have enough money to purchase vegetables for her family. But now not only is she fulfilling her family's nutrition requirement but she is also being able to sell the extra vegetables in the market for some cash.

According to Tara Banu, the villagers are not conscious about the health related matters and they cannot always eat nutritious food due to their economic insolvency. In Chowhali, flooding occurs almost every year. After the flood, crisis for food is created. Specially, due to lack of nutrition, many people suffer from malnutrition. She suggested others to start vegetable gardening around their households. She suggested other villagers to follow her work plan. She said that villagers have started to cultivate vegetable in their households and they all have the same mindset that 'cultivating vegetables is profitable for the village'.





Vaccination of Cattle arranged by Nurul Imaan Kutubi

Ali Akbar Dale Union is situated in the South of Island Upazila- Kutubdia which is famous for its agricultural products (especially vegetables). This area holds the country's first pilot project on wind electricity. Nurul Imaan Kutubi is the resident of Ward 02 of Nasiarpara Village under the Ali Akbar Dale Union. He is a farmer but he is also associated with different social welfare activities.

Nurul Imaan Kutubi is a Change Agent of BDPC implemented RODDUR project. In 2009, he was selected as the Change Agent (CA) in the sensitization meeting of Ward's

Disaster Preparedness Committee with everyone's approval. As a CA, he participated in many trainings and workshops arranged by BDPC and learned about Disaster Preparedness, Risk Reduction, Good Governance, Rights, Social Accountability, Right to Information and other issues. Now he is involved with various socially initiated awareness activities and works to improve the community's welfare. One of his inspirational activities is presented as an example.

Through Daily Prothom Alo newspaper, he came to know that the dangerous Anthrax disease is spreading

across the whole country. He then immediately contacted the Upazila Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department to collect the vaccine for this disease. At first, the Officer denied to provide any support. But Nurul Imaan said to the Officer, "if the cattle are vaccinated right now then they will be able to survive the disease and secondly it is peoples' right to demand for the vaccine." hearing this, Officer agreed to provide the vaccine to him. Then he urged everyone in his village to come with their cattle on a pre-fixed date and place so that all the cattle could be vaccinated together.

In the mean time, he made a list of the cow owners. On 16 September, 2010, with the support of Field Officer of Upazila Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department, Mr. Morshed Alam, he made the arrangement for providing vaccine to 175 cows from 100 households in the village. He said, "It is a great pleasure to do something for the society". He also expressed his willingness to continue such social welfare activities in future as well. Seeing his initiatives, many Change Agents have been encouraged to make themselves involved in such social welfare activities.





Pumpkin Cultivation by Motaleb Munshi and Agricultural Service

Motaleb is an educated, 52 year old, hard working man. He is also a father to 3 daughters and 2 sons. He resides in Ward 06 of Ghorjanan Union, a Union which is disconnected from Chowhali Upazila in Sirajgonj district. Mainly it is a char area and the people are mostly farmers. This area is not yet connected with electricity and the communication system is very poor. So government services are difficult to avail here.

Motaleb Munshi was selected as a respected member of Ward's Disaster Preparedness Committee through everyone's consent in the Sensitization Meeting arranged by BDPC. After that, he has attended all the meetings and training programmes organized by BDPC considering it his duty. He has earned knowledge on services and their providing organizations, Good Governance, Rights and on other issues from these events. This

knowledge motivated him to claim services from service providing organizations and also to encourage others to get services from them.

Though he is a farmer but he has been practicing agriculture without any suggestion or advice from the Agriculture Officers. Similarly many others in the area also do not have knowledge of the services of the Agriculture Office. From BDPC's training programmes, he came to

know Government has instituted the Agriculture Office to support local farmers. So he thought that he will take suggestions from the Agriculture Office for his farming chores. A few days ago, he cultivated pumpkin in his land. But he noticed that though the plant was growing quite well but the flowers were not budding.

So he was concerned and therefore went to the Agriculture Office and visited the desks of Agriculture Officer



and the Block Supervisor of his Ward, Md. A. Salam. As the officials were not present on that day, he became disheartened and looked for help from other officers but they did not give him any support. After some difficulties, he finally collected the mobile number of the Block Supervisor and called him after returning home. But the officer responded that he will not be available in his office for the next one week, but he could still discuss his problems over phone. Motaleb then said that he has started cultivating pumpkins and though the plants were fine but the flowers were not budding on time. The Block Supervisor suggested him to poke holes in the plants and assured him that he will come and see the plants next week. According to the suggestion, Motaleb poked holes in the plants and waited for the officer to visit him. The Agriculture Officer came and after seeing the plants said there should not be any further problem. But after few days he noticed that the flowers were dying and the buds were not coming out. Motaleb concerned from it, went again to see A. Salam and

told him that the flowers were dying and the pumpkins were not growing at all. Then the Block Supervisor suggested him to pollinate the flower that does not have buds with the flower that have buds.

He said that due to shortage of male flowers in his land the pollination process in being hampered. He advised Motaleb to take one or two male flowers and brush it with all the female flowers and by doing so the female flowers won't die. Motaleb followed all the instructions and soon noticed that the female flowers were not dying like before. Later on, things got better and production increased appreciably as a result of which he was able to sell the pumpkins in the market. Now when other people face similar problems, Motaleb advises them. Due to his initiative the farmers of the village became financially solvent by growing and selling pumpkins in the last season. Later on, when we visited that Ward, we came to know that the people of this area are now going to different offices for acquiring services.



Vaccination of Tarka Disease and Md. Aminul Islam

Md Aminul Islam lives in Umarpur Village of Ward 05 in Umarpur Union. His father is a UP Member. Aminul is an educated and energetic young man. He was elected as the Change Agent through everyone's consent when the Sensitization Meeting and the Ward's Disaster Preparedness Committee Meeting were arranged under the RODDUR Project.

As a Change Agent, he has participated in all the workshops and meetings arranged by BDPC. He also

participated enthusiastically in the sessions arranged for the training of the CA's. Through these trainings, he has come to learn about Disaster Risk Reduction, Service and Service Providing Organizations, Right to Information etc. He has been trying to disseminate this information among other villagers.

He said, "I have learned a lot from the trainings arranged by BDPC, like the field officers from different government organizations are

supposed to visit our wards once or twice a week but I do not remember seeing them even once. As I know that it is our right to get services from the service providing organizations, so I contacted the Upazila Livestock and Animal Husbandry Department Officer and informed him that none of the Field Officers have ever visited our ward. And as our village is at a distant place, it is not possible to move with our cattle by boat to acquire veterinary services. I contacted the field officer responsible for my ward and asked him why he doesn't visit the ward. The field officer informed that Boyalkondi is too far away and it is expensive to travel that far and there is no budget allocated for such transportation.. I set a date and place when all the cattle will be gathered for vaccination and the officer may come on that day and

provide the vaccine to all the cattle. After mutual discussion, the event was scheduled on 23 September, 2010 and on that day the officer was brought to the village on a boat. The Field Officer immunized all the cattle with the vaccine and the animals were saved from dangerous diseases like Tarka. To make this happen BDT 700 through contribution from all the villagers was raised to bring the Officer to the ward. In this way, the people of Ward 5 were able to save their main asset - cattle from the Tarka disease and they were able to sell those cattle during Eid-ul-Azha with profit. Through BDPC's trainings, we have come to know about the activities of the service providing organizations and by accessing those services we have developed ourselves."





Fulfilling the Demand of Drinking Water in Kutubdia by Setting up Tube wells

Kutubdia is an island Upazila under the District of Cox's Bazaar. A devastating cyclone hit this sea bound Upazila in 1991. Almost 20,000 people died in the disaster. After the disaster, the Government of Bangladesh and various other organizations helped to restore normalcy in these areas by providing different types of support and relief. The water of this area is salty as it is surrounded by sea. It requires setting up deep tube wells to avail fresh and pure drinking water and costs around BDT 70,000 to BDT 100,000. It is almost impossible for the families here to set up such expensive tube wells.

Regarding the importance of fresh and pure drinking water, BDPC with the support of MJF installed 9 tube wells in 6 Unions of Kutubdia Upazila. The sites for the tube wells were

selected after discussions with the local administration and community people. About 6000 people of 1000 families are now have access to fresh pure drinking water. They do not need to travel great distances in search of fresh drinking water anymore.

The women of this area said that, "we had to go too far off places to collect drinking water. Sometimes it was difficult to get the water as some of the tube wells were under private ownership. At present, the sufferings have been reduced appreciably as the tube wells are now within our reach." The people are very happy as these tube wells are fulfilling the demand of fresh and pure drinking water. They think that more tube wells in different villages will ensure the availability of fresh and pure drinking water in this area.

Human Rights and Md. Rafiqul Islam

44 years old Md. Rafiqul Islam lives in Ward 03 of Lemshikhali Union of Kutubdia Upazila under the District of Cox's Bazaar. He is a Change Agent of RODDUR project, a project supported



by MJF and implemented by BDPC in order to ensure "Risk Reduction through Empowering People". He is also a member of Ward Disaster Preparedness Committee of the respective Ward.

As a Change Agent, he has attended many training programmes, workshops, meetings etc. organized by BDPC. He has come to know about Human Rights, Citizen Charter, Social Accountability, Good Governance, Disaster Risk Reduction and many

more issues by attending these programmes.

After participating in these trainings and workshops, Md. Rafiqul believes that he is a confident and conscious person in the society. He also plays the leading role in the local development and social welfare activities of his community. Especially, in ensuring human rights, his contribution is significant in his locality.

It's a story of 29 May, 2012. A phone call around at 6 in the morning came to Mr. Rafiqul Islam from Subrata Borua, the responsible officer of Karnafuli Police Station of Chittagong. He informed that a 22-23 year young boy has died in Karnaphuli Dock Yard. He has been identified as a resident of Mosharraf Hossain Sikder Para Village of Lemshikhali Union in Kutubdia Upazila. His name is Md. Manik and his father's name is Abdur Shukkur. The details helped Rafiqul Islam to recognize the person and he told the officer that he will be present at the police station at earliest.

Rafiqul Islam arrived at the Police Station with the father of the deceased at around 10.30 am and gave their identities to the Officer. He introduced himself as the Change Agent of BDPC's RODDUR Project. The Officer said that the death was an unnatural one and the dead body has been sent to morgue. Then Rafiqul Islam shared his knowledge on the

activities and responsibilities of that respective Police Station when a person dies in his non-native place. He especially focused on the Human Rights and Right to Information Act-2009. He requested the Officer to take necessary initiatives so that the bereaved family members can get full support and service from the police station.

Subrata Barua assured him that all types of support and services will

be provided to the family members. Then he took them to the incident spot. From there, they went to the morgue and without the post mortem; the dead body was given to the family members. Subrata Barua thanked Rafiqul Islam for his awareness and consciousness and expressed his best wishes to him. Rafiqul Islam opines that more people should be made aware regarding such matters if we want to build a prosperous Bangladesh.



Abul Kashem, A Dedicated Social Worker

Md. Abul Kashem, a 54 year old farmer is a resident of Yousuf Matbor Dangi village under North Channel of Faridpur Sadar Upazila under the District of Faridpur. Due to financial crisis in his family, he could not study beyond class 8. With two sons, a daughter and a wife, he is living a comfortable life in his area.

As a social worker, Abul Kashem is very popular in his area. He plays vital roles in any kind of awareness and welfare activities in his locality. In 2009, he was made the Change Agent of RRDPGR project by the recommendation of the community people. After that he attended many training programmes and workshops organized by BDPC and contributed

his knowledge and experience greatly in social welfare and development activities of the area. Establishing Community Hospital, setting up tube wells, constructing roads for the area are some of his

important contributions that has made him special in his community. Some stories of his contributions for the betterment of the community are presented below.

Establishing Community Clinic:

The village of Yousuf Matbor Dangi does not host any hospital or clinic for the treatment of the local community people. So the people are greatly deprived from general medical care.



to set up tube well by their own. In 2009, Abul Kashem compiled a list of 10 households who do not have access to arsenic-free water and shared it with the Union Chairman. The Union Chairman investigated the problem and took all necessary steps to reduce the sufferings of the people which occurred due to unavailability of drinking water.

Construction of Road:

To aggravate their sufferings the roads are underdeveloped and the transportation system is very poor. Abul Kashem realized the importance of hospital and clinic in this area. In 2011, BDPC arranged a Public Hearing meeting where Abul Kashem had the opportunity to talk to the Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer regarding the importance of a Community Clinic in his area. The officer inspected the village and said that if the villagers are willing to give some acres of land then the Upazila Health and Family Planning Department will take the initiative to build a community clinic there. After that, Abul Kashem talked to many villagers for acquiring land for the clinic, but no one showed interest to give their land. At last, Abul Kashem donated his own land to the Upazila Health and Family Planning Department for the construction of a community clinic.

In Yousuf Matbor Dangi, no road was available to go to the north part of the village. In the monsoon season, people suffered hugely due to unavailability of roads. Realizing its importance, in 2011 Abul Kashem held talks with the ruling political party of his area about this grave issue. At first, he did not get the response he expected but his hard work and willingness for the betterment of the society persuaded the politicians to consider it. They finally gave assurance of constructing a road in that part of the village and after a few days, a soil laden road was paved there.

Setting up Tube Wells:

Arsenic is one of the major problems in Abul Kashem's area. As the people here are very poor, they cannot afford

Abul Kashem's contribution in these social activities has been outstanding. It has not been easy, he had to face made obstacles and difficulties but his resilience and determination nullified all problems. He said, "I have utilized the knowledge and experience that I gained from BDPC in my social welfare and development activities. I am very grateful to BDPC for that. I think, if we all become more aware of our rights then we can develop a better society for our next generation."



Accomplishing the Commitment of Opening a Complaint Box in the Agriculture Office

Bangladesh is a country well known for natural disasters. Disaster professionals even label Bangladesh as the “supermarket of disasters.” The country is also considered as one of those countries which possess high risks to natural calamities. Although the brave resilient people of Bangladesh have been fighting against it for ages but their problems are aggravating due to worsening climate change scenario. The sufferings intensify due to people’s lack of accessibility to quality services from government service providing organizations. This deprives

the people from their due rights and empowerment which eventually leads to increase in disaster risks.

BDPC is implementing the RRDPGR project with the support of MJF in Kutubdia. The project focuses on community disaster risk reduction through awareness building. As a way to realize that goal, BDPC organized Kutubdia Information and Service Fair on 03rd and 04th April, 2012 at the Officer Club’s Field in Kutubdia. People across all classes and professions in Kutubdia participated in this fair amid great

fervor. Huge interest and excitement was seen among the local community regarding this Fair. The Public Hearing Session which saw participation from both community people and local government authorities was the main attraction of the fair. Mr. Naresh Chandra Baroi - Deputy Director of Agriculture Department and Mr. Boni Amin - Agriculture Officer, like the other higher officials of different service organizations, gave answers to various problems raised by the farmers. The officers gave assurance to take necessary actions to provide solutions to their problems. The Agriculture Officer pledged to make the Agriculture Department more friendly and effective in providing services to farmers. He also promised to open a complaint box at the Agriculture Office so that the farmers can easily pass on their queries and complaints to the authorities.

As a result of that commitment, on 11 October, 2012, Mr. Boni Amin, the Agriculture Officer installed a complaint box in the Agriculture Office. The good news was soon forwarded to Kutudia BDPC office.

Mr. Boni Amin said, "It is very satisfying to fulfill any commitment that we make to our people and I request the community to use this service in the truest manner. I think this will help the farmers to ask their questions easily and directly to us and we are committed to solve those problems effectively."

The community people especially the farmers said, "from now on, we will be able to raise our complaints easily to the Agriculture Office which will help us to solve our problems quickly. We are hopeful that the Agriculture Office will be more prompt in addressing our queries. We are very grateful to the Agriculture Office and BDPC for helping us to ensure our rights."

Faizul Azim, a man who brought the change in the community

Kutubdia Upazila, also known as the Daughter Island, is located in Bay of Bengal in the southern part of Bangladesh under the district of Cox's Bazaar. Mr. Md. Faizul Azim lives in Ward 5 of Ali Akbar Dale Union of Kutubdia Upazila where the only wind generated power station of Bangladesh is situated. Most of the people of this area are associated with farming, fishing and salt business for their livelihood. Besides farming, Faizul Azim is also involved with other small businesses.



In the past, most of the farmers took land as lease from the land owners and took loans for cultivation from the money lenders at a high interest rate. In most of the cases, the farmers had to return home almost empty handed after giving away a crucial part of the produced crop to the land owners. To make matters worse, paying off the debt to the money lenders with high interest at the end of the year was a constant headache for them. The situation used to become more difficult for the farmers when they were struck by disasters which ultimately resulted into loss of cultivated crops. This would lead to great crisis. In situations like this the poor farmer and his family had to starve for days.

In 2009, Faizul attended the sensitization meeting arranged by BDPC in Ali Akbar Dale Union. Known as a conscious person in his community, all recommended and selected him as a volunteer. After that he attended all the programmes arranged by BDPC in his locality. From these programmes, he gathered knowledge on disaster risk reduction, good governance,

rights and services from different service providers, Right to Information 2009 and many more issues.

After receiving trainings from BDPC, Faizul Azim became confident. He thought of making the life better for him and his fellow farmers who were also going through the similar situation. He spoke to other farmers about constructing a Farmers' Cooperative Society in his area. At first, 30 lease farmers had agreed with him and formed a Farmer's Cooperative Society in Ali Akbar Dale. After all this was done Faizul reported to BDPC about his work.

With the help of BDPC, Faizul prepared a Constitution for the Cooperative Society. All the farmers decided that they would not take loans from the money lenders and put their savings to make a fund for the Cooperative Society and from that fund; the farmers would take loan without any interest for their cultivation purpose. They also decided that all the members of the cooperative Society would sit once in a month for meeting to finalize their

monthly activities. At present, the fund amount has reached to TK 1,20,000.

In 2011, some Ministers and High Government Officials from South Africa visited Kutubdia and they had appreciated the contribution of Faizul Azim in order to reduce the risk of disasters and poverty in that locality. A few months ago, media personnel from a renowned TV show 'Hridoye Mati o Manush' visited Kutubdia and showed his appreciation for the hard work put by Faizul Azim in reducing the sufferings of the farmers. After that incident, the Cooperative Society was named after the popular agriculture TV show, 'Hridoye Mati o Manush Farmers Welfare Society'.

On 14 January, 2013, the farmers organized a 'Farmers Gathering and Experience Sharing Meeting' in Ali Akbar Dale Union. The meeting was moderated by Mr. Faizul Azim. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mr. Md. Firoz Ahmed was present as the Chief Guest and Mr. Omorendra Barua, the Upazila Agriculture Extension Officer attended the meeting as the Special Guest of the event. Other Officials from the Upazila Agriculture Officers were also present at the meeting. The Chief Guest, Mr. Md. Firoz Ahmed made a commitment to provide his assistance with the registration process of the Welfare



Society. He also asked the Managers of local branches of Agriculture Bank and Sonali Bank to cooperate with the farmers in their production activities by providing loans at a reasonable interest rate.

Later Cooperative Society had purchased 03 shares of the local Taxi Cooperative Society costing Tk 30,000 so that the students of that area can travel to schools for free. This also enabled the local people to travel at a reasonable cost.

Mr. MD. Faizul Azim said, "BDPC showed us the path of how we can reduce our poverty and help ourselves for the betterment of our life. The trainings and workshops arranged by BDPC have made me and many people aware and conscious about our rights which gave us the confidence of taking such initiatives. Now we don't have to take loans from the money lenders and the farmers can easily take loan from the Cooperative Society without any interest. This improved our lifestyle in a significant manner and also reduced our risk to disasters. I must thank BDPC for all the support and contribution they have made to change our life socially, mentally and financially. We need more assistance from BDPC and we want them to be with us, like they have been in the past."





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