

EEP NEWS

Promoting the model for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh

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Islamic Relief Bangladesh has been implementing a 3 years project named “Promoting the Model for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty (EEP) in Bangladesh” in Rajarhat under Kurigram district. The project aims to ensure food security as well as livelihood opportunities for 1000 extreme poor and marginalised people in the locality. This project also targets vulnerable women to empower them through access to group led financial services by developing their skills and capacity. The project is funded by Islamic Relief Germany and implemented by the department of Economic Empowerment and Governance programme of Islamic Relief Bangladesh.

Achievements



Selection of 800 extreme poor and destitute families & formed SHG

Selection of 800 extreme poor and destitute families and formation of total 32 Self-help Groups. Household survey has already been conducted to identify 800 households as project beneficiaries.



Foundation training for Staff and planning workshop on EEP Project held in RTC, Rangpur

EE&G Program organised a 3 days training and planning workshop which was held during 24-26 February 2020 at Rangpur Training Center (RTC) in IRRO, Rangpur. Total 7 staff participated from EEP Germany project of EE&G program in the training.

Provides intensive capacity building support to SHGs leaders & IGA skill training to 800 beneficiaries



128 leaders of SHG have received leadership development and financial management training. Through this training they attained knowledge and skills on leadership development, financial management, conflict resolution, record keeping, financial transaction, accounting, bank transaction, participatory decision making process for proper implementation of group activities as self-help group. Moreover 800 beneficiaries have received IGA skill training according to their business plan for establishing IGA.

EEP Project Inception Workshop Held in Rajarhat



A Project Inception Workshop was held on November 03, 2020 at the conference room of Officers Club, Rajarhat Upazila Parishad. The workshop was chaired by Nur-e-Tasnim, UNO of Rajarhat, Kurigram. Jahid Iqbal Sohrawardi, the Chairman of Rajarhat Upazila Parishad was the chief guest and Enamul Haque Sarker, Programme Manager of EEGP-IRB were present as special guest. Government and non-government officials, political leaders, local elites, journalists, civil society members were participated in the workshop.

Provides interest free grant from SHG-led revolving fund management system for livelihood development



All SHGs have started Qard-al-Hasana (interest-free grant) in their groups from the savings fund. SHGs are allocating interest-free grant to group members for starting small income generating activities, constructing hygienic latrines and health care. Till August 2021, total 1116 members of SHG have received interest-free Qard-al-Hasana worth of BDT 10,82,075.

Initiates group-led savings mobilisation and management



32 SHGs have established community-based food bank (Total 10,072.50 kg rice has been deposited till August, 2021). The project initiated group-led savings mobilisation and management system for all 32 SHGs. Accumulated savings are BDT 9,28,403.

Distributes climate-friendly fruit saplings & vegetable seeds



1600 saplings have distributed among 800 project beneficiaries (every household 2 saplings) to address climate change adaptation. The project has also distributed vegetable seeds support to 800 beneficiaries. Beneficiaries are nursing those saplings according to the instructions given by the project. This will eventually reduce their nutritional deficiency.

Organises community awareness sessions



Project has conducted 19 community awareness sessions on social issue, health, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition with wider participation.

Subsistence Allowance for most vulnerable & PWD families



200 most vulnerable and PWD families have received BDT 500 as monthly subsistence allowance and this will continue for one year.

An indomitable Shefali

Mst Shefali Begum is a resident of Panthapara village under Kurigram District. She lives with her husband Md. Abdur Rashid (45), who is physically ill for many years and takes medicine regularly. He is a van puller and does not have any steady income. Besides, Shefali and her husband had no farming land. They live in “Khas” land (government land). Shefali has a son and two daughters. Her elder daughter is already married off and lives with her husband. The poor parents had to borrow money at a higher interest rate for her marriage. The younger son and daughter both are school goers.



Shefali and her family had to starve countless days. To ensure meal for her family, she started a small grocery shop taking loan from others. But due to capital shortage, she could not able to run the shop properly. Covid pandemic made this situation worsened. Gradually her sales started to decrease. Some of her neighbors bought products without paying her the price. Eventually, this could not allow her to save any penny for her family and her business. In August 2020 when Islamic relief Bangladesh started the EEP project, they came to know about Shefali. Considering her vulnerability, her community recommended her to select her as a project beneficiary. Later, she became a member of Purbo Panthapara SHG (self-help group) at Panthapara village of Umor Majid Union.

She received her start up capital of BDT 12000 to initiate a business after receiving

her training from the EEP project of Islamic Relief Bangladesh. She received required IGA skill training from the EEP project to develop her business. She attended group awareness sessions regularly and had learned about nutrition, hygiene, health & sanitation. Through the cash support, she purchased some useful items for her small shop and saved a small amount for the future as well.

She said, “The training on small business which I have received from EEP project of IRB has changed my strategy of running my small business. Before the training, I could not maintain register effectively and also I was unable to save a single penny. Now I can maintain register properly. I know which products would give me more profit, and also I can add more items in my shop whenever it is needed. Now my daily profit is approximately BDT 300. I am truly grateful to Islamic Relief Bangladesh.”

She deposits small funds in the group savings and sometimes takes small loans. Everybody in her community respects her. Her husband discusses important issues with her before taking any decision. Now her only wish is to educate her children to the highest level. She considers her shop as an asset for her family and wants to expand it in order to make more profit.



Aleya who changed her fate



Mst. Aleya Khatun, a 69 years elderly resident of Umar Majid union of Kurigram, has now transformed herself into a better position through self-employment. She earns money from duck farming.

Aleya Khatun was married off at a very young age. Life became miserable when she lost her husband as he was the lone earner of her family. Aleya was expecting her second child at that time. "I had no specific income source. I became even more helpless when I was deprived from my husband's property. So, I had no choice but to relocate myself to my father's place with my children."

Initially, she started tutoring on basic holy Quran for living. Sometimes she earned by serving as a midwife in her village. However, the income was very little to fulfill basic needs of her children. She often received financial support from her family which got ceased after her father's demise.

Aleya said, "It was a huge challenge for repaying back the debt which I had to borrow due to my daughter's wedding. Even I could not offer any treatment for my mentally disabled son.

I quit tutoring long ago for my poor vision and also midwifery is no longer available. I had to depend only on my safety net allowance (widow and disability allowance)."

In 2020, considering her extreme vulnerability, EEP project team enlisted her as a project beneficiary. She got selected as a member of Telipara Self Help Group. Being a member, she started doing small savings, internal lending & depositing fistful rice at SHG. She received IGA training on duck rearing organised by IRB. After receiving training on duck rearing, she got BDT 12000 cash support for IGA start up. She invested the money on establishing small scale duck farm with her relative as a shared business.

She had 300 ducks. After rearing them for three months, she started selling 200 ducks at TK 400-450 per piece. Meanwhile, as a shareholder Aleya Khatun earns a specific amount from the profit whenever they sell ducks or eggs. Now her weekly income is BDT 700. Aleya is very happy getting involved with this profitable business. She releases the ducks to nearby ponds and as such it does not incur any cost on feed.

The income is helping Aleya to drive out from her financial hardship and uncertainty she had before. She is also learning different awareness issues like hygiene & sanitation, early marriage, dowry, savings mobilization from participating weekly discussion on the SHG Meeting. She is optimistic about raising ducks on a large scale in the coming days.



Provides cash for productive means

Project has distributed BDT 96,00000 to 800 beneficiaries (BDT 12,000 for each beneficiary) as seed money for establishing their IGA. This fund is non-refundable and it would be further used as revolving fund in their respective SHG to diversify IGA. Every beneficiary has purchased productive asset as per business plan for their economic development.

Few More Actions

EPP project celebrated International Women's Day



Project field staff is demonstrating business plan



Conducting Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools at community level



Visioning exercise facilitated by senior staff



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