

Giving Voice to the Voiceless



Islamic Relief Bangladesh organised a walk on the morning of 6th December to mark the international campaign of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The walk was attended by female MPs, NGO Affairs Bureau and the Secretary of Women and Children's Affairs Ministry. Representatives from the United Nations, foreign embassies and INGOs were also present.

Akmal Shareef, Country Director of Islamic Relief Bangladesh delivered a welcome speech to the guests. Other speeches included that from MP Shabnam Jahan around the collective responsibility we have to end violence against women. MP Aparajita Haque explained that the Bangladesh Government has taken various steps to end violence against women and that these activities should be intensified through working with other organisations.



16 Days of Activism Fair in Dhaka

Dhaka North City Corporation organised a two-day event from 29th to 30th November to mark the campaign. The event was held at Gulshan Wonderland Park and the Islamic Relief Bangladesh office set out a stall to showcase activities undertaken both locally and globally.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Momen and Dhaka City Mayor Atiqul Islam visited the stall and expressed appreciation for handicrafts made by women in Rangpur following support from Islamic Relief. Md. Tajul Islam MP, Minister of the Local Government for Rural Development and national cricketer Taskin Ahmed also visited Islamic Relief's stall.



Consultation meeting on Gender Justice

On 26th August we organised a consultation meeting with Acid Survivors Foundation around the Islamic Gender Justice Declaration. The presentation was delivered by Akmal Shareef, Country Director of Islamic Relief Bangladesh.

Akmal explained that the Declaration is a call to action against gender injustice from an Islamic faith perspective and seeks to tackle discrimination and harmful practices carried out against women and girls in Muslim communities.

He described how Islamic Relief has spent four years developing the Declaration, working with humanitarian agencies, faith leaders and community organisations.



Media trip to Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Resilience Project



In September, Islamic Relief organised a media visit to Shyamnagar, Satkhira to showcase the Scaling up Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Resilience Project (SCCADR). This project was implemented by 700 of the poorest households in the area and involved the adoption of homestead vegetable gardening, bag gardening and integrated farming to lessen nutritional deficiency and reduce food related expenditure.

22 journalists were invited to visit our field project where community members practice integrated farming techniques involving drip irrigation and cattle and livestock rearing, which have boosted agricultural productivity in the area.

After visiting numerous households and interviewing residents, journalists were very impressed by Islamic Relief's input to the area and many local newspapers then published stories describing the benefits of the project.

How we helped improve waste management in Sylhet

Islamic Relief provided 54 garbage collecting vans to Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) in December with the aim of enhancing its waste management capacity and demonstrating proper techniques for urban waste management. The SCC will now carry out further activities including the distribution of additional vehicles for waste collection and training for waste collectors.



Celebration of International Day for Disaster Reduction



13th October marks the International Day for Disaster Reduction which is observed globally to raise awareness about the importance of disaster prevention and practical ways in which communities can reduce risk.

The theme for 2019 was “reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services.” Islamic Relief celebrated the day by setting up a stall at International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction’19 at Bangabandhu International Conference Center and broadcasting a documentary for ATN channel. We also organised an art competition at National Shishu Academy and held campaigns, rallies and workshops in our project areas of Khulna, Satkhira and Sylhet.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited our stall, showing appreciation for our rooftop garden projects. A large number of visitors also came by our stall to inquire about our projects, operations and services.

Islamic Relief supports flood survivors in Jamalpur

In July 2019, parts of northern Bangladesh were inundated with heavy week-long monsoon rain. According to the National Disaster Response Coordination Center (NDRCC), 21 districts of northern, north-eastern and south-eastern Bangladesh were flooded as a result. Islamic Relief Bangladesh with support from Islamic Relief Canada implemented an emergency flood response programme in the Jamalpur district, which was one of the most heavily affected areas. Through this project we provided multipurpose cash-grants, fast-growing vegetable seeds, dignity kits and emergency latrine kits to 2,160 flood-affected families.



Mayanur turns her life around with the help of our Climb Up project

Mayanur is a mother of two living in Char Tazamuddin. She was unable to work due to the impairment of one of her hands and her husband earns very little as a rickshaw driver. The family were living in extremely basic conditions without water facilities, latrines and often, without enough food.

In 2015 Islamic Relief selected Mayanur as a direct beneficiary of the Integrated Sustainable Development (ISD) Climb UP project which involves the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

Following training and a cash grant of BDT 16000, Mayanur was able to start a successful small business selling seasonal fish. She was then able to repay the cash grant and use the profits to repair her home. She has also bought a section of land where she is growing vegetables to meet the daily needs of her family who are now self-sufficient and can afford to eat three meals a day.

The programme also provided leadership and financial management training, as well as educational materials (pens and exercise books) for her two daughters.

Mayanur expresses her gratitude to Islamic Relief saying, “My family is living a comfortable life now. People thought that I could not do anything because of my disability but the situation is much better than before. Islamic Relief helped me come out from an ultra-poor situation to a comfortable life. I will always be thankful to Islamic Relief.”



Vulnerable children are given the opportunity to succeed

An Islamic Relief sponsored child gains admission to top university

Chaity was a sponsored child under Islamic Relief's Orphan Sponsorship Programme. Her father has been absent since she was very young, leaving her mother struggling to pay for her education. With Islamic Relief's support, Chaity was able to complete her schooling and went on to gain admission at Rajshahi University, one of the top public universities in Bangladesh where she is studying marketing.

Chaity dreams of becoming a teacher after she graduates. "Without the support and assistance of Islamic Relief it would not be possible for me to be here. I hope Islamic Relief will continue supporting me to accomplish my dream."



Celebrating Universal Children's Day 2019

Islamic Relief Bangladesh celebrated Universal Children's Day 2019 in Amtali, Khulna, Rajbari, Golachipa, Derai, Sunamganj, Thakurgaon & Rangpur Sadar Upazila to create awareness about children's rights and improve child welfare. We took part in various events such as art and essay competitions, Q&A sessions and prize giving events. Attendees included Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Upazila Chairman, Upazila Vice-chairman and education, social services and health officers.

Guests expressed their appreciation for Islamic Relief work and thanked them for supporting numerous orphan children and their families. They enjoyed the children's performances and praised them on their drawing and debating skills. Invited journalists also appreciated the event and expressed their interest in joining such events in the future.



Praise for Islamic Relief's women's empowerment work in Haripur

On 23rd December, key members of the district including the Subdistrict Chairperson and Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) visited a field office of the Promoting Women Empowerment Rights and Economic Development (PoWERED) project in Haripur. After a short presentation, they had the chance to meet Self Help Groups and visit beneficiaries of the project. They praised Islamic Relief's work in Haripur, particularly women's protection and empowerment initiatives.

As a result of Islamic Relief's work, women in the area are now aware of their rights and are speaking out against injustice and gender related discrimination both within their family and in the wider community. Visitors were also impressed to see self-help groups working so effectively and independently. The UNO described Haripur as a "model village" given the number of projects it has implemented and wishes to see this replicated in other villages. He and other visitors thanked Islamic Relief for its tremendous contribution to the community. The Upazila Chairman described Islamic Relief as "an exceptional organisation" which "works differently and transparently for poverty elimination... of ultra-poor households."



Media attention for our women's empowerment projects in Thakurgoan

In December, Islamic Relief Bangladesh organised a media visit to its PoWERED project area in Thakurgoan. A total of 14 journalists from various print and digital media including Thakurgaon press club and Haripur press club attended. The event comprised of three different sessions: An overview presentation of the project, a self-help group visit and a beneficiary household visit.

Journalists were impressed by Self Help Group's (SHG) activities and noted that women are now more empowered, aware of their rights and various safeguarding issues. They commented that "the SHG model could be a good example to others organisation to eliminate poverty and help women's empowerment."

They also praised the activities of the PoWERED project and were impressed to see the level of progress that had been made.



Mothers of Islamic Relief sponsored children receive Joyeeta Award 2019

Sarothi, Monoara and Asma are mothers of Islamic Relief sponsored children in the Rajbari district. In 2019 they received the Joyeeta Award, a unique initiative introduced by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to honour individuals who have worked to overcome various challenges faced by women.

The awards were presented at a lively event organised by the Deputy Commissioner of Rajbari in December 2019. Sarothi was presented with an award in the Economic Development category while Monoara and Asma received awards in the Resilience against Violence of Women category.

During their speech they thanked Islamic Relief for the immense practical and emotional support they had provided. Deputy Commissioner Dilsad Begum attended the event as the chief guest. Other attendees included District Administrator Fakir Abdul Jabbar and Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ashek Hasan.



Asma Begum



Sarothi Rani Kundu



Monoara Khatun

Workshop on Economic Empowerment project held in Pirgacha

On 31st July, Islamic Relief Bangladesh organised an inception workshop of the Promoting the Model for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty in Rural Bangladesh at Pirgacha Upazila auditorium. 52 people from different groups participated in this event, including the Upazil Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Pirgacha Upazila, Upazila level government officials, journalists, NGO representatives and Apex body members. The programme consisted of a description of project objectives, a display of activities and a comprehensive description of operations, strategies and context for wider stakeholders.

The chief guest said, “The Model of EEP Project is very impressive... if we are able to implement all the activities successfully, we hope it will be effective as well. The project will surely assist to eliminate extreme poverty of our rural people.”

The president of the meeting responded by saying that Islamic Relief will work closely with those living in difficult conditions to help alleviate their poverty. They thanked Islamic Relief Canada for supporting this project in Bangladesh.



Islamic Relief runs Urban Risk Assessment training

Islamic Relief organised training for city corporation volunteers around urban hazards and how to conduct Risk Reduction Action Plan (RRAP) in urban areas. Participants included volunteers from six selected wards and representatives from the fire service and civil defense. Staff from Islamic Relief Bangladesh, Action Aid, Concern Universal Bangladesh and Concern Worldwide also attended.

Community members shared their experience of fire incidents and the role of volunteers in their areas. An interactive session also took place on risks, hazards and disasters, where participants relayed examples and solutions were discussed. Participants were also given information on the disaster management cycle, importance of preparedness and response mechanisms.

Members of the Tejgaon Fire Service Station ran a session on different types of fire incidents and corresponding responses. They explained that volunteers play a paramount role in fire incidents in finding the source of the fire and contacting relevant emergency services.





Meeting with Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, MP



Meeting with Planning Minister M. A. Mannan MP



Meeting with Dhaka North City Mayor Atiqul Islam



Seminar on Child Labour



Meeting with Deputy Speaker Md. Fazle Rabbi Miah, MP



Participating Global Climate Strike



Global Hand Washing Campaign



Celebration of International Volunteer Day



Response to Cyclone Bulbul



Distributions of Saplings



Inception of Supporting Flood Forecast based Action and Learning in Bangladesh Project



Sensitisation on Reducing Child Labour

Brought joy to the underprivileged people on Eid Al Adha



Many struggling families cannot afford meat except a few time in a year. Like every year in 2019 Islamic Relief distributed qurbani meat during Eid Al Adha in Bangladesh. This time we reached out to nearly 110000 people in 32 districts. Selecting beneficiaries considering their vulnerabilities total 695 cows were locally sourced,slaughtered and good quality meat were ensured for all. IRB distributed to nearly 28000 families and each family received a pack of 2 KG meat.

Monmala Begum, a meat recipient said, Alhamdulillah, we eat fish as our diet everyday but we arrange meat once a month or while anybody visits us as guest. But we cannot afford beef once in a year. In the market beef is sold tk- 600-650 per kg. It is available only in our upazilla sadar which is 14 km away from our home.”

Thousands of people echoed the same like Monmala thanking Islamic Relief for arranging sacrificial meat for them which they hardly can afford.



How we helped to restore Obironnesa's home and livelihood

Obironnesa is a widow and carer to a disabled daughter who lives in a village in Dewangonj, Jamalpur. After her husband passed away she was left without any financial support and began working as a seasonal day labourer. When the floods struck, Obironnesa and her daughter were forced to take shelter on the roadside as their home was severely damaged. They lost all of their possessions and no longer had access to basic provisions such as safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

Obironnesa attended an Islamic Relief community consultation meeting where she discussed her situation with the project team. Islamic Relief provided her with a multi-purpose cash grant of BDT 5500, dignity kits, fast-growing seeds for homestead gardening and access to a women's latrine. She used the cash grant to repair her home and the seeds to grow vegetables, which she sells for additional income.

"I am very delighted to receive emergency support from Islamic Relief Bangladesh during my time of need. This support is a motivation to move forward with my daughter", she says.



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