



CONCERN
worldwide

**Catalysing Change
In Bangladesh**

Introducing Concern Worldwide

Concern Worldwide is an international humanitarian organisation dedicated to tackling poverty and suffering in the world's poorest countries.

Our **vision** is to work towards a world where no-one lives in poverty, fear or oppression; where all have access to a decent standard of living and the opportunities essential to a long, healthy and creative life; and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Our **mission** is to help people living in extreme poverty achieve major improvements in their lives which last and spread without on-going support from Concern Worldwide. To achieve this mission, we engage in long term development work, respond to emergency situations, and seek to address the root causes of poverty through education and advocacy.





We believe that gender equality is a pre-requisite for development. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

Concern Worldwide works in partnership with the people living in extreme poverty in the poorest countries, enabling them to improve their lives and livelihoods. Using our knowledge and experience, we try to influence decisions made at local, national and international levels that can significantly reduce extreme poverty while addressing the social inequalities, risks and vulnerabilities that the extreme poor face. The quality of our overall endeavour is measured by our contribution to the rapid elimination of the extreme form of poverty which is defined by the United Nations as “absolute poverty”.

Our core values are derived from a central value – Extreme poverty must be targeted, and this shapes our work across the globe. We are guided by these core values:

- Respect for people comes first.
- Gender equality is a pre-requisite for development.
- Development is a process, not a gift.
- Greater participation leads to greater commitment.
- All governments have responsibility for poverty elimination.
- Emergencies call for rapid response.
- The environment must be respected.
- Good stewardship ensures trust.

Concern Worldwide in Bangladesh

Founded in 1968, Concern Worldwide was formally established in Bangladesh in 1972. Since then, we have been working with the poorest people to transform their lives and help them realise their fundamental human rights - to food, to health, to education, and ultimately, to a life of dignity.

Working for more than 4 decades in Bangladesh today, our programmes have evolved to tackle the multi-dimensional nature of poverty as we continue to focus on the lack or low return of assets (financial, natural, human, physical, social and political), inequalities, risks and vulnerabilities according to our framework to address extreme poverty.

Along with our emergency humanitarian response programmes, we have structured our development work in Bangladesh into 4 contexts -Urban, Char, Haor and Coastal, each of which is designed with interventions using the poverty framework at 3 levels: micro – at the community and union level, meso - at the sub-district and district level, and macro - at the national level.

Concern Worldwide aims to reduce extreme poverty by addressing hunger, primary education, maternal and child health, inequality, and disaster risk reduction in Bangladesh by working at all these 3 levels.

**We aim to
reduce
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in Bangladesh.**

Our Country Strategic Plan: 2011-15 states these 5 specific objectives:

1

Freedom from hunger through increased income & assets.

2

Access to maternal & child health services prescribed in government policy.

3

Access to education for all children of primary school age.

4

Respect & equal treatment for people categorised as extreme poor or socially excluded.

5

Protection from loss of life or assets, injury, or destitution due to natural disasters or climate change.

We implement all our programmes via partnerships with local, national and international organisations. We establish relationships with key actors involved in research and advocacy, and collaborate with wider coalitions in order to mobilise convincing evidences based on our work, and thus influence policy processes and translate our experience into wider level change.

We are the first Irish organisation to receive certification from Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) -the Geneva based organisation which works to make humanitarian work more accountable & transparent through self-regulation, compliance verification & quality assurance certification.

We work persistently to ensure that the extreme poor can equitably claim their fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution of Bangladesh, and have access to essential services like education, healthcare, social safety nets, etc. provided by the government.

We also work with local and national governments to improve the governance in public service provision, by facilitating a process whereby communities are able to hold the government service providers accountable, and can thus take initiatives to improve their own situations.



We are passionate believers in the potential of people. Photo: Map Photo Agency

We promote innovation in all aspects of our work for achieving greater impact. For instance, we have introduced technological solutions to address information and service gaps, send/receive early warning messages about natural disasters, make money transfers to our participants through mobile technology, and provide health care through telemedicine. We collect project data digitally to monitor, analyse and report the results of our programmes quickly and accurately. We also work with the private sector to strategically incorporate their expertise and bring in technological innovations in our programmes.



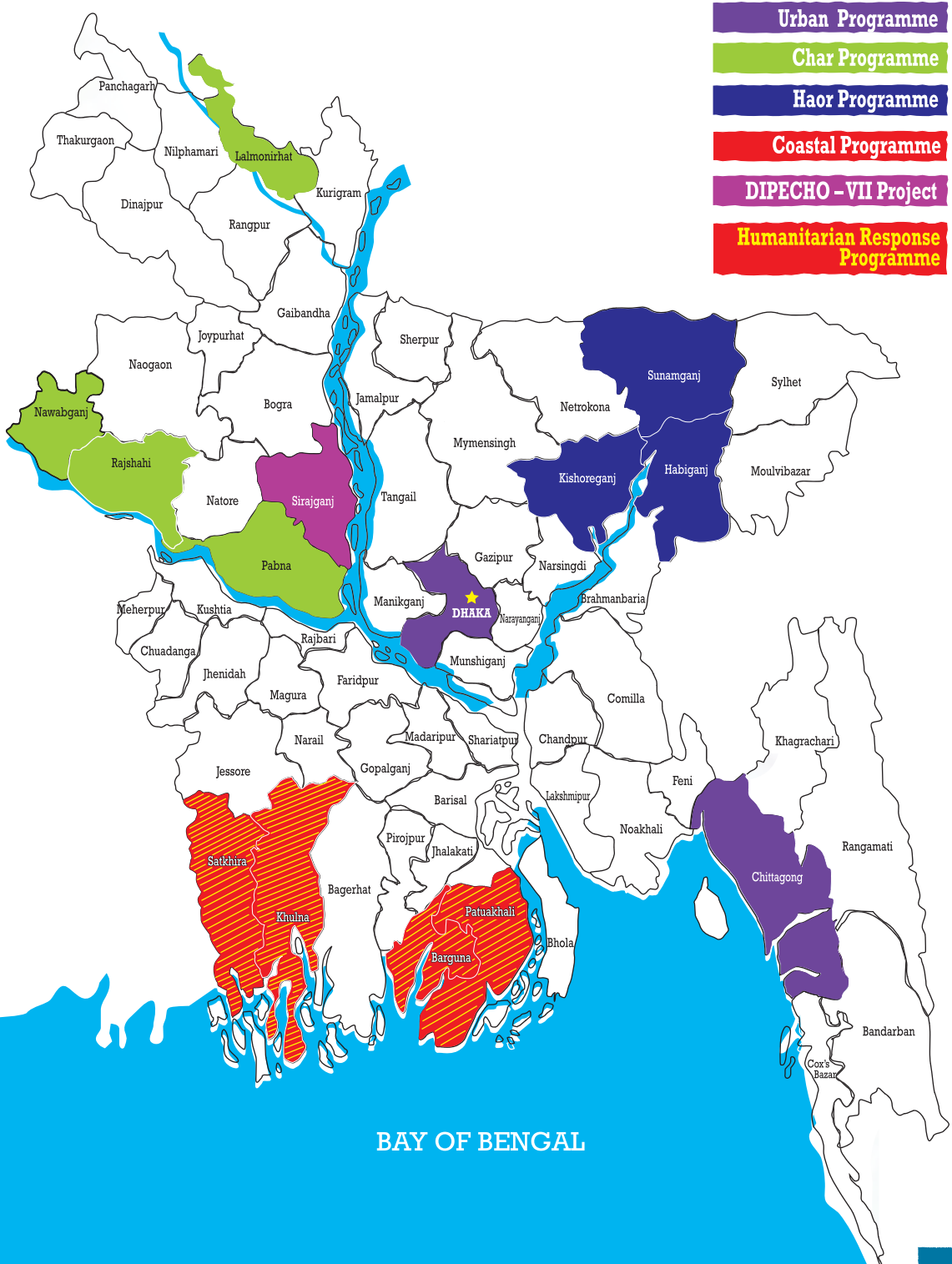
Since poverty and inequality are inextricably linked, we strongly emphasise on promoting equality across gender, ethnicity, faith, disability, marital status, HIV/AIDS status, etc. in order to create an enabling environment for the extreme poor to overcome hurdles.

Our rights based approach provides an impetus in this process and help us increase the awareness of the poor or marginalised on the rights and legal provisions like Laws and Acts on dowry, divorce, early marriage, domestic violence and women's rights.

We aim to build disaster resilience not only at the household and community levels, but also at all levels of governance structures. Thus, we have mainstreamed disaster risk reduction (DRR) in all of our programmes so as to minimise loss of lives, health, and assets of our participants. We believe that this is key to increasing resilience especially among the extreme poor whose coping capacities are limited.

This approach is integrated within our own emergency contingency planning so that when a response is needed, we are prepared to deliver the most appropriate interventions, and disaster-struck communities are prepared to receive our support in the most efficient and timely manner.

Where Concern Worldwide Works in Bangladesh



A woman in a teal sari with gold patterns stands in the center, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. She is surrounded by a group of children of various ages, some looking at the camera and others looking away. The background shows a dense, informal settlement with simple structures and a thatched roof. The overall scene depicts a crowded, low-income urban environment.

Urban Programme

Urbanisation is one of the major challenges facing Bangladesh. Rural-urban migration is the key factor driving urban population growth in the country, accounting for an estimated 66% to 80% of the total. The worst form of urban migration - that of the destitute to slums, squatter settlements and pavements, is highly unlikely to slow down. At the very lowest end of the poverty continuum in the urban areas are the pavement dwellers, who are deprived of their basic rights and entitlements as citizens of Bangladesh. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

Urban Programme

The Urban Programme currently targets 13,433 participants, including 15,056 pregnant and lactating women, and 21,077 children aged below 2 years living in squatter settlements and on pavements. To facilitate their graduation out of extreme poverty, the programme focuses on increasing their incomes along with the protection and expansion of their assets, improving access to basic services such as health, education, water and sanitation, etc. In addition to reducing vulnerability to eviction and harassment, the programme works towards changing the perception of the wider society about pavement and squatter dwellers, and establishing their rights and entitlements through advocacy and policy interventions with the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Extreme Poverty and Urban Pavement Dwellers.

Amrao Manush project

The Amrao Manush project has been designed to improve the lives of 10,000 pavement dwellers, particularly those who are least served by NGOs, the private sector or government programmes.

Through 9 multi-purpose Pavement Dwellers Centres (PDC) located in Karwan Bazar, Green Road, Mouchak, Kamlapur, Shadarghat, Paltan, Ananda Bazar, Mirpur 1 and Mirpur 2 areas of Dhaka, the project provides services such as bathing, cooking, resting and locker facilities, basic health services, tutorial support to school-going children, etc. The PDCs also function as day-care centres for young children and night shelters for women and children.

Co-funded by Irish Aid and Concern Worldwide, the Amrao Manush project is being implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partners, SAJIDA Foundation, Nari Maitree, Social and Economic Enhancement Programme (SEEP), and Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP), as well as the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) and People's Empowerment Trust (PET).



Young children get pre-schooling support at the PDCs' day-care facilities. *Photo: Drik*



First-aid & basic health-care services for all participants. *Photo: Drik*



PDCs also function as night shelters for women, girls & children. *Photo: Drik*



Lockers for safe-keeping of valuables for all participants. *Photo: Drik*



The Amrao Manush project provides life skills education, apprenticeships and vocational training facilities for adult participants. *Photo: Drik*



The project also offers savings schemes for its participants who all maintain their individual savings books. Additionally, the participants are now able to open their own bank accounts through our advocacy efforts. *Photo: Drik*



Sharing meeting between personnel from the Amrao Manush project and DSCC. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

The Amrao Manush project ensures street-children's right to education through facilitating PDC-based pre-primary education by supporting their admission in government primary schools and further assisting them with stipends from DSCC.

The project also provides life skills education, apprenticeships, and vocational training for its adult participants. In addition to savings schemes, participants are supported with small grants to increase their income and employment opportunities. Along with basic health care, the project also provides psycho-social support to the community members by connecting them with various expert organisations that offer specialised support like legal aid, services from women support centres, etc.

The project advocates for the issuance of Birth Registration Certificates for its child participants to ensure schooling and National Identity Cards for its adult participants for ensuring recognition as citizens. Additionally, it liaises with government departments and law enforcing agencies so as to protect pavement dwellers and reduce the hindrances they face like eviction, harassment, etc.



Participants are able to claim their National Identity Cards through our advocacy efforts. *Photo: SEEP*

Transforming the Lives of Urban Homeless People through the Amrao Manush Model

Transforming the Lives of Urban Homeless People through the Amrao Manush Model is an expansion of our Amrao Manush project and has the same objective of improving the livelihood security and social protection of another 3,500 pavement dwellers at 3 more locations - Gabtoli in Dhaka, and Kodomtoli and Enayet Bazar in Chittagong.

This project operates 3 Multi-Purpose Centres (MPCs) which provide basic services such as day-care for young children and night shelter for women and children, resting, cooking, bathing, health care, locker facilities, etc. It also provides savings schemes, block grants, apprenticeships, and vocational trainings.

The project also advocates for the issuance of Birth Registration Certificates and National Identity Cards for its participants. Through the community structures called Community Development Committees (CDC), pavement dwellers are mobilised to claim their rights and entitlements.

The project is funded by UNDP, and is implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partners, SAJIDA Foundation, SEEP, and Chittagong City Corporation.



Participants receive grants to start their small businesses while their children receive education support. Photo: SEEP



Participants' children are able to claim their Birth Registration Certificates through our advocacy efforts. Photo: SAJIDA Foundation



Participants receive apprenticeships and vocational training as a part of the project's interventions. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



Participants are enabled to start their own businesses after completing their apprenticeships. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Investment for Economic Empowerment of Street-dwellers (InvESt) project

The InvESt project aims to empower 700 street-dweller households in Dhaka to graduate out of extreme poverty by increasing their income and expanding their asset base.

The project engages 116 participants in the street food business under the brand **Mojar Khabar**, and provides them with entrepreneurship skills, assets such as food carts and hand carry boxes, and start-up capital to sell freshly prepared, hygienic low-cost snacks and meals in Dhaka city. The food is prepared at 2 central kitchens in Mirpur and Malibagh in Dhaka, and is sold by the participants through their food carts and hand-carry boxes.

Apart from the **Mojar Khabar** food business, the InvESt project supports another 584 street-dwellers with assets and start-up capital to operate other food-related small businesses. They are provided with training on business aptitude, client relationships, etc. so that they can operate their businesses independently.

Funded by shiree/UKAid, the InvESt project is implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partner NGO, Nari Maitree.



The **Mojar Khabar** brand is becoming increasingly popular in Dhaka city.



The food is prepared at the central kitchens located in Mirpur and Malibagh. Photo: Nari Maitree



Participants sell freshly-prepared snacks and meals through the **Mojar Khabar** food cart. Photo: shiree/UKAid



Meals sold at the **Mojar Khabar** food carts are popular among customers from all backgrounds. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Integrated Urban Nutrition Project (IUNP)

IUNP aims to incorporate quality nutritional services in the existing urban primary health care systems, and in turn, improve the nutritional status of around 15,000 women and 21,000 children aged below 2 years living in squatter settlements and the streets of Dhaka and Chittagong by increasing their access to quality nutrition services.

IUNP provides training and logistics support to local NGO and government health service providers so as to integrate nutritional interventions, such as growth monitoring, and micro-nutrient supplementation for children as well as pregnant and lactating women, into the routine packages offered in primary healthcare clinics. It also supports 2 health facilities for screening and treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM), especially for the extreme poor, through an established facility-based SAM management process following the national protocol.

Additionally, IUNP promotes proper feeding and caring practices for infants and young children, and arranges counselling sessions on adequate food intake and rest during pregnancy. It also raises awareness on health and nutrition through cultural shows and commemoration of national and international events.

IUNP is funded by Irish Aid and implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partners, Nishkriti, Image, Khulna Mukti Sheba Shangstha (KMSS), Tarango, Radda MCH-FP centre, and Chittagong Medical College Hospital.



IUNP incorporates nutritional interventions in primary healthcare clinics. *Photo: Foring*



Growth monitoring, as well as micro-nutrient supplementation services for children aged below 2 years. *Photo: Foring*



Nutrition status monitoring for pregnant women and lactating mothers. *Photo: Foring*



Counseling sessions on various issues for pregnant women and lactating mothers. *Photo: Foring*

Char Programme



Char is a Bengali term used to refer to a highly unstable land mass that changes shape through erosion and the build-up of sand and silt from the river. Sandy and infertile, with low productivity and limited cropping seasons, the Chars are particularly prone to frequent floods and climatic shocks. Stranded in the northern and western districts of Bangladesh due to poor communication networks, Char-dwellers are thus marginalized from the benefits of the mainland and are forced to risk their lives and livelihoods in constant vulnerability to drought, floods, erosions and cyclones. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh.*

Char Programme

The Char Programme intends to enable 15,000 households residing in remote island chars in the northern and western districts of Bangladesh move out of extreme poverty by supporting them with access to livelihoods and food security, health and education, as well as water, sanitation and hygiene, and reduced risk and vulnerability to hazards.

In addition, this programme ensures Char-dwelling women's control over decision-making processes, productive resources and opportunities, and advocates for reduced inequality in allocation of government resources for island chars especially for social safety nets, agriculture, education, and health services.

Nodi O Jibon-II (NoJ-II) project

The NoJ-II project focuses on improving the food security of 15,000 extreme poor households in remote island chars of Bagha and Godagari Upazilas in Rajshahi; Chapai Nawabganj Sadar and Shibganj Upazilas in Chapai Nawabganj; Lalmonirhat Sadar, Aditmari, Kaliganj and Hatibandha Upazilas in Lalmonirhat; and Pabna Sadar and Bera Upazila in Pabna Districts.

The project provides technical and input support for crop cultivation, kitchen gardening, horticulture, poultry and dairy farming, etc. It collaborates with various research institutions to find locally appropriate crop varieties and technologies to increase production and solutions for sustained income. Through all this, it ensures that participants benefit from both knowledge and demonstration.

The NoJ-II project supports collective marketing mechanisms like assemble markets. It also promotes women's productive roles by including them in Community-Based Organisations, Self-help groups and Producers groups. In addition, it puts a special focus on raising awareness on gender-based violence, inequality, climate change adaptation, DRR, etc.

By taking the lead in creating a vibrant Local Char Alliance and National Char Alliance, the project aims at ensuring rights and entitlements for the Char dwellers.

Co-funded by Irish Aid and Concern Worldwide, the NoJ-II project is implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partners- Assistance for Social Organization and Development (ASOD), Agriculture Sustainable & Socio-Economic Development Organization (ASSEDO), Bangladesh Organization for Social Services (BOSS), Grameen Bohumukhi Unnayan Sangstha (GBUS), Job Opportunity For Basic Support (JOBS) Bangladesh, Jamuna Samaj Kallyan Sangstha (JSKS), Own Village Advancement (OVA), Samata Nari Kallayan Sangstha (SNKS), Uttara Development Program Society (UDPS), and Unnayan Shamannay.



Participants are given technical and input support for the cultivation of high-value crops. Photo: Unnayan Shamannay



Participants receive livestock assets for adopting income generating activities. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



Participants are given vocational training so that they can adopt alternative livelihoods. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Char Health and Education (CHE) project

The CHE project aims to enhance human capital by promoting the quality of primary education and health services in the remote and vulnerable chars of Kaligonj Upazila in Lalmonirhat, Pabna Sadar in Pabna, and Bagha Upazila in Rajshahi Districts. It focuses on improving the literacy and numeracy skills of primary school children studying in both government and private schools, and enhancing the maternal and child health status in the remote Chars.



Primary school students engaged in group work. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

The project also works towards increasing female representation in local education and health structures so as to enable char-dwelling women to contribute to decision-making processes within local institutions, such as School Management Committee (SMC), Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Community Clinic Management Group (CCMG), Union Standing Committee-Health and Education, etc.

The CHE project also emphasizes on addressing inequality and raising awareness among communities through courtyard sessions, street drama, songs, etc. with the aim to reduce gender-based violence, inequality, HIV/AIDS, risks and vulnerability to disasters and climate change.



Children take remedial classes taught by volunteer teachers. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Furthermore, the CHE project engages in capacitating key stakeholders of the Union Parishad, Upazila and District authorities so that they can deliver quality primary education and health services, and also work towards increasing resource allocations for the marginalized Char-dwellers.

Funded by Irish Aid, the CHE project is being implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partners, Own Village Advancement (OVA), Bangladesh Organization for Social Service (BOSS), and Samata Nari Kallyan Shangstha (SNKS).



The project organises awareness sessions on women's rights and entitlements. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



The project arranges cultural events to promote maternal and child health, education, etc. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) project

Until December 2013, a WASH project had been implemented under the Char Programme for the extreme poor households in Sadar Upazila of Chapai Nawabganj, Bagha Upazila of Rajshahi and Bera Upazila of Pabna.

The project focused on increasing access to safe drinking water, and quality sanitation facilities, while working on improving hygiene and sanitation knowledge, attitude and practices among the wider community.

Major interventions included the installation of shallow tube-wells and construction of block latrines in primary schools, together with mass awareness campaigns on health and hygiene.

The WASH project also focused on strengthening capacity of the relevant institutions, and supported government departments in ensuring improved water and sanitation facilities for the remote Char-dwellers.



Shallow tube-wells with high platforms are installed to keep the water safe during floods. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Co-funded by charity:water and Concern Worldwide, the WASH project was implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and its partners, Samata Nari Kallyan Sangstha (SNKS), Jamuna Samaj Kallyan Sangstha (JSKS), and Agriculture Sustainable and Socio-Economic Development Organization (ASSEDU).



Installations of tube-wells mean clean and safe water for the entire community. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



We believe that everybody is entitled to healthcare services irrespective of where they live. *Photo: Map Photo Agency*

Telemedicine and mHealth Pilot project

With a view to provide health services to the extremely poor households and communities in remote island chars of Bagha Upazila in Rajshahi, Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh is currently implementing a Telemedicine and m-Health pilot project through a partnership with Grameenphone, Telemedicine Working Group of Bangladesh (TWgBD), and local NGO Samata Nari Kallayan Sangstha (SNKS) within the Char Programme.

This pilot project provides general health care as well as basic maternal and child health services through telemedicine centres.

These telemedicine centres are run by rural medical practitioners who are connected with a selected pool of specialist doctors based in Dhaka who provide their professional advice and prescriptions via information technologies.

The project also ensures referral services using a network encompassing reputed clinics, hospitals and pathological laboratories through comprehensive partnerships with health officials at the Union, Upazila and District levels, including Community Clinic Management Groups, Community Support Groups, etc.

Haor Programme



Haor is a local term used to describe bowl-shaped, tectonic-depressions which stay submerged for nearly 6 months in a year. Situated in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh, haors become extensive water bodies during the monsoon and dissipate in the post-monsoon period. As floods become increasingly frequent and severe, sufferings of haor-dwellers especially the extreme poor continues to escalate as they suffer from homestead erosion, frequent crop losses, etc. Other factors preventing development in this region are remoteness, lack of adequate communication infrastructure, and fewer social safety nets provided by the government. *Photo: Map Photo Agency*

Haor Programme

The Haor Programme aims to improve the lives and livelihoods of extreme poor households residing in the remote haors of north-eastern Bangladesh. The programme focuses on livelihood and food security, health, water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in Kishoreganj, Sunamganj and Habiganj districts of the country. In addition to addressing disaster risk reduction and inequality, the programme focuses on empowering the extreme poor to negotiate for their rights and entitlements in order to benefit from government resources and services.

Economic and Social Empowerment of Extreme Poor (ESEP) project

The main objective of the ESEP project is to improve the lives and livelihoods of 22,500 extreme poor households living in the haors of Itna, Austogram and Mithamoin Upazilas of Kishoreganj; Dharmopasa and Jamalganj Upazilas of Sunamganj; and Ajmiriganj Upazila of Habiganj districts of Bangladesh.

Co-funded by shiree/UKAid and the Government of Bangladesh, the ESEP project is implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and its partners, Voluntary Association for Rural Development (VARD), Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB), and Pally Bikash Kendra (PBK).



Participants receive grant support for running small businesses of their own. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*



Participants receive input and technical support for the cultivation of cropping patterns using new technology which are tested to give greater yields. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*



Participants are supported with livestock assets for adopting income generating activities. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

The ESEP project provides technical and input support for the cultivation of tested cropping patterns using new technology that enables participants to harvest multiple crops from the same piece of land each year. Not only does the project provide the necessary training, asset transfers and regular monitoring support to facilitate sustainable livelihoods, it also actively engages its participants to implement the 'next' cycle of businesses independently using their own savings and profits from previous cycles.

Additionally, the project creates linkages with relevant government departments to ensure proper resource allocation and access to basic services provided by the government.



Community nutrition promoters provide door-to-door counselling on various health issues. *Photo: FIVDB*

With a view to improve the nutritional status among target households, the ESEP project provides iron folic acid, deworming tablets/suspensions, and promotes exclusive breast-feeding, complementary feeding, and encourages hygienic cooking practices using inexpensive and easily available ingredients among other interventions.

Through Community Nutrition Promoters, it also raises awareness on various health issues by engaging religious leaders, students and teachers, traditional birth attendants, and rural medical practitioners.



Participants receive assets as means for ensuring their food and livelihood security. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) project

A WASH project is being implemented under the Haor programme as well. Targeting a population of 1,28,764 in Austagram, Itna and Mithamoin Upazilas of Kishoreganj, Ajmiriganj Upazila of Hobiganj, and Jamalgonj Upazila of Sunamgonj districts, the WASH project aims to increase access to safe water and sanitation facilities at schools and communities.

Major interventions of this WASH project include the installation of deep tube-wells with elevated platforms, and construction of 3-unit block latrines with urinals at schools. The project also focuses on improving the hygiene and sanitation knowledge, attitude and practices of the wider community.

Co-funded by charity:water and Concern Worldwide, the WASH project is being implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and partners, Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) and Voluntary Association for Rural Development (VARD).

Additionally, the WASH project focuses on strengthening the capacity of community-led institutions in order to mobilize local resources for maintaining the water source and sanitation facilities. It also works towards enhancing support and response from local and national decision makers so as to establish the rights and entitlements of targeted communities in relation to improved water and sanitation facilities.



The project arranges awareness sessions on health and hygiene practices. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



3-unit block latrines are constructed inside school compounds. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



We believe that everyone has the right to opportunities and choices for a long and healthy life. *Photo: Drik*

Telemedicine and mHealth Pilot project

Similar to the Char programme, we are also implementing a Telemedicine and m-Health pilot project in the remote haors of Itna Upazila in Kishoreganj district through a partnership with Grameenphone, Telemedicine Working Group of Bangladesh (TWgBD), and local NGO, Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB).

This pilot project aims to provide general health care as well as basic maternal and child health services through telemedicine centres established in remote haors.

These telemedicine centres are run by rural medical practitioners who are connected with a selected pool of specialist doctors based in Dhaka who provide their professional advice and prescriptions via information technologies.

The project also ensures referral services using a network encompassing reputed clinics, hospitals and pathological laboratories through partnerships with health officials at the Union, Upazila and District levels using Community Clinic Management Groups, Community Support Groups, etc.

Coastal Programme



The coastal areas in the south-western part of Bangladesh along the Bay of Bengal are highly prone to natural and man-made disasters, which cause major impacts on the overall well-being of the people. Livelihoods security, especially of the extreme poor, continues to be at stake because of heavy dependence on natural resource based occupations which are regularly affected due to lack of off-farm employment opportunities, inequitable distributions of assets and resources, and the impacts of disasters like cyclones, floods, rise in sea-levels, salinity, droughts induced by climate change. *Photo: Map Photo Agency*

Coastal Programme

The Coastal programme focuses on the poverty-stricken coastal regions in the south-west of Bangladesh and India which are highly vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change impacts. It aims to support extreme poor communities by improving their livelihood and food security, and reducing their risk and vulnerabilities to disasters and climate change. It also focuses on the biodiversity conservation of the Sundarbans - the world's largest natural mangrove forest, by creating alternative livelihood options for Sundarban Dependant Extreme Poor Households (SDEPH).

Increasing Resilience and Reducing Risk of Coastal Communities to Climate Change and Natural Hazards in the Bay of Bengal- Paribartan project



Participants receive technical and input support for climate-smart farming practices. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



Saplings of mangrove and other salt-tolerant plants are nurtured to be planted around the Sundarbans to help rehabilitate the deforested land. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Paribartan is a multi-country project, which is being implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh in Khulna, Satkhira, Borguna and Patuakhali districts of Bangladesh, and Jagat-singhpur and Kendrapara districts of Odisha state in India.

Targeting 32,000 extreme poor households of 120 villages in the Koyra Upazila of Khulna, Shyamnagar Upazila of Satkhira, Borguna Sadar Upazila of Borguna, and Kalapara Upazila of Patuakhali in Bangladesh, the Paribartan project supports its participants and target communities by increasing their ability, along with that of relevant authorities, to prepare for and adapt to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change.

The Paribartan project also facilitates innovative community mobilization approaches by engaging youth groups and promoting a forum of women leaders to uphold the sustainability of project impacts.

Co-funded by European Union and Concern Worldwide, the Paribartan project is implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh and its partners, Shushilan and Jagrata Jubo Shangha (JJS) in Bangladesh, and Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC) in India.



Participants receive technical and input support for soil-appropriate agricultural production. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

Focusing on building resilience against climate change and disaster impacts through comprehensive community-based adaptation activities, the Paribartan project works closely with the local government, including disaster management authorities, civil society leaders, grassroots organizations, etc. in order to reduce the impacts of climate change.

In addition, the project has established collaboration with relevant research institutions, universities and extension departments to design and validate the community-based adaptation technologies.

Pilot initiatives are also being taken within the Paribartan project in order to demonstrate practical ways for climate change adaptation, while the lessons learnt from these initiatives are being promoted and shared amongst practitioners and policy makers at the state, national, regional and international levels through the facilitation of Community Resilience Forum in the Bay of Bengal region.



Participants are supported with rainwater harvesting systems and poly-bed vegetable gardens in their households so that they can produce enough vegetables to ensure their food and livelihood security. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

Sundarbans Development & Alternative Resources Integration- SUNDARI project

The SUNDARI project targets 25,000 marginalised and extreme poor households excessively dependent on resources found in the Sundarban Impact Zone in order to improve their livelihood and food security by promoting alternative livelihood options.

The SUNDARI project is being implemented in Batiaghata, Dacop, Koyra, and Paikgacha Upazilas of Khulna district, and Shyamnagar, Kaligonj and Assasuni Upazilas of Satkhira district in Bangladesh with a view to conserve the bio-diversity of the Sundarbans Reserve Forests through sustainable forest management, and to protect communities from the impact of future disasters.

Participants receive technical training and cash grants from the SUNDARI project so that they can undertake climate-adaptive income generating activities and other entrepreneurial initiatives to reduce their dependency on the Sundarbans Forest Resources.

Co-funded by European Union under the Sundarbans Environmental and Livelihoods Security (SEALS) project framework in collaboration with the Department of Forest and Environment, the SUNDARI project is being implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh, and partners, Shushilan and Jagrata Jubo Shangha (JJS).



Participants receive technical and input support for climate-smart agricultural production and marketing to create alternative livelihoods. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



Participants are given livestock assets so that they can adopt alternative livelihoods. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



Women participants are given apprenticeships and vocational trainings so that they can take entrepreneurial initiatives of their own. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh



Project participants are mobilized to form their own Self Help Groups, Community Based Organizations, Producers and Collectors Groups so as to empower them to facilitate the change in their livelihood patterns and thus, reduce their dependency on the fragile ecology of Sundarbans. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*

SUNDARI project participants are mobilised to form their own groups such as Self Help Groups, Community Based Organizations, Producers and Collectors Groups, etc. so as to empower them to facilitate changes in their livelihood patterns and thus, reduce their dependency on Sundarbans' fragile ecology.

The SUNDARI project also arranges various activities such as mock-drills, songs and dramas in public gatherings to raise awareness on the Sundarbans' bio-diversity conservation, climate change adaptation, DRR, etc.

Apart from this, the project organises trainings for Union Disaster Management Committees on their roles and responsibilities regarding Standing Orders on Disaster, as well as frequent meetings with other government departments to enhance disaster preparedness levels.

Additionally, the SUNDARI project strives to ensure the protection of the Sundarban Reserve Forests by strengthening grass-roots institutions contributing to active Sundarban Reserve Forests Co-management Committees with the support of the Forest Department.



Activities such as mock-drills, songs and drama are organised in public gatherings to raise awareness on the bio-diversity conservation of the Sundarbans as well as disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, etc. *Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh*



Disaster Risk Reduction & Response Programme

We respond to emergencies and disasters through our partner organisations when the local capacity is exhausted, and where our assistance brings added benefit to those people who need it the most. *Photo: Map Photo Agency*

Disaster Risk Reduction & Response Programme

As stated in our organisational mission, we are committed to alleviate suffering and hence, responding to emergencies is a core mandate. Over the past years, we have responded to all major disasters in Bangladesh like floods, flash floods, cyclones, tidal surges, water logging, etc. and have been investing in DRR and preparedness activities across all our programmes.

Our Preparedness for Effective Emergency Response (PEER) initiative builds the capacities of all our staff and that of our partner organisations located across the country so that they are able to respond to disasters anywhere in Bangladesh within 72 hours.

Recognising the impact of disasters on extreme poverty, we have integrated DRR across all our programmes so as to increase resilience to natural hazards at the household, community and local government levels in order to minimise loss of life, health, and productive assets. Thus, we devote considerable efforts at reducing risks and vulnerability to disasters using tools such as assessment, preparedness, mitigation and response, along with various advocacy initiatives.

Building a Disaster Resilient Bangladesh - DIPECHO-VII project

Targeting 11,750 households in Sirajganj Sadar, Belkuchi and Kazipur Upazilas of Sirajganj district, the DIPECHO-VII project promotes a culture of DRR by enhancing the capacity of vulnerable communities and strengthening relevant disaster management systems and structures across the project locations.

By promoting the standardized DIPECHO rural Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) model, the project contributes to the institutionalisation of disaster management planning and risk assessment processes by Disaster Management Committees at the District, Upazila, Union and Ward levels.

The DIPECHO-VII project facilitates the preparation and implementation of Risk Reduction Action Plans (RRAP) which focus on various disaster mitigation measures like housing, livelihoods, community infrastructure and WASH. It also provides training on disaster preparedness measures at all levels so as to enable all stakeholders to increase their resilience to natural hazards.

The standardized DIPECHO rural CBDRR model is currently being replicated in the Char, Haor, Coastal and Urban programmes of Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh.

Funded by European Commission DG for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection (ECHO), the DIPECHO-VII project is being implemented by Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh under the National Alliance for Risk Reduction & Response Initiative (NARRI) and local NGO, Gono Kalyan Sangstha (GKS).



Frequent meetings are held among participants to monitor disaster preparedness levels and thus increase their resilience to hazards.
Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Cyclone Mahasen Emergency Response project



Participants received cash following a training session on ways to restart lost livelihood options. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

In partnership with Jagrata Jubo Shangha (JJS), Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh had provided food and livelihood support to 1,360 households affected by the deadly Cyclone Mahasen in Barguna and Patuakhali districts of Bangladesh.

Funded by European Commission DG for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection (ECHO), this recent emergency response programme implemented Cash-for-Work schemes and livelihood grants to meet hunger and nutrition gaps of the most vulnerable households determined by a community-based targeting approach.

Water-logging project

In partnership with JJS, Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh had recently supported 1,365 households that were hit the hardest by the protracted water-logging crisis in Khulna and Satkhira districts of Bangladesh through an emergency programme funded by UKAid. Implementing Cash-for-Work schemes, this humanitarian response aimed to ensure not only food and livelihood security of the most affected, but to also contribute to flood protection, drainage and on-farm water management in the water-logged areas.



As a part of the Cash-for-Work scheme, participants contributed to flood protection, drainage and on-farm water management in the water-logged areas. Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh





Photo: Map Photo Agency

Advocacy work within our Programmes

We believe that the root causes of poverty and vulnerability cannot be addressed by service delivery alone, and that advocacy can play an important role in tackling some of these root causes. We want to establish the rights of the extreme poor and create an institutional environment that understands and responds to the needs of these marginalised people.

Having a wealth of ground level experience over the past four decades, we believe that it is important for us to use our position to speak out for the marginalised people so as to make substantial impact on the problems we are attempting to address. Thus, advocacy is an integral part of our programmes and as mentioned earlier, our objective is to work at all 3 levels- micro, meso and macro.

At the micro level, we facilitate people's mobilisation and build people's institutions so as to empower the extreme poor to claim their rights to services provided by government institutions. We also focus on improving governance of local government institutions (LGI) at this level.

At the meso level, we facilitate civil society alliances with a view to enhance their capacity to put pressure on sub-district and district level administration so as to ensure that services are reaching out to the extreme poor in hard-to-reach areas.

At the macro level, our focus is to do policy advocacy with the aim to influence national policies and mobilise resources in favour of the poor. In addition to developing and ensuring effective implementation of policies, we also address any exclusionary aspects of existing national policies.

**We want to establish
the rights of the
extreme poor,
& create an institutional
environment
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& responds
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marginalised people.**

Our advocacy work throughout the Programmes are focused at 3 levels:

MICRO LEVEL

**Realizing rights,
facilitating people's
mobilization,
building people's
institutions, &
improving gover-
nance of LGIs.**

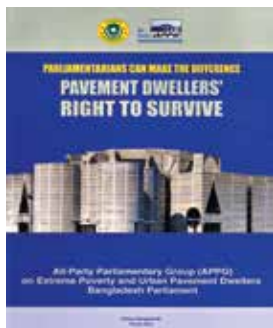
MESO LEVEL

**Enhancing capacity
of local partners,
forging diversified
partnerships,
facilitating civil
society led allianc-
es, & strengthening
LGIs.**

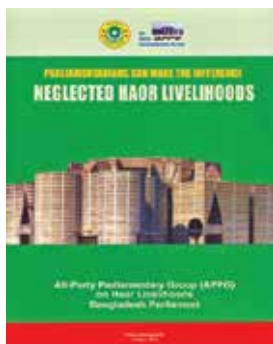
MACRO LEVEL

**Influencing
resource mobiliza-
tion & investment
through dialogue &
lobbying so as to
develop & imple-
ment pro-poor
policies by the
government.**

“Hold the Government Accountable to Adopt and Implement the Policy Issues on Haor Peoples’ Livelihoods and Urban Pavement Dwellers in Bangladesh”



Joint publication with the APPG on Extreme Poverty and Urban Pavement Dwellers



Joint publication with the APPG on Haor Livelihoods

This campaign with the All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG) - a legislator's forum of the Bangladesh Parliament, focuses on holding the government answerable for enacting and implementing pro-poor policies which potentially benefit the poor, vulnerable and socially excluded groups of the society.

The overall objective of our project is to advocate for the empowerment of haor and urban pavement-dwellers so that they can claim their fundamental rights. Using 2 platforms –the APPG on Extreme Poverty and Urban Pavement Dwellers, and the APPG on Haor Livelihoods, we have been working on strengthening the willingness and capacities of Parliamentarians to bring changes in existing national policies to expedite pro-poor growth. Together we work towards creating a platform for the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experiences, and jointly developing processes for long-term work both inside and outside the Parliament.

These APPGs had published 2 books with our support- “**Parliamentarians Can Make The Difference: Pavement Dwellers' Right To Survive**” and “**Parliamentarians Can Make the Difference: Neglected Haor Livelihoods**”. Both of these books highlight the key issues faced by the urban pavement dwellers and the marginalised haor communities respectively, and focus on the actions required by the Parliamentarians to bring them out of extreme poverty.



The book launching event of “**Parliamentarians Can Make The Difference: Pavement Dwellers' Right To Survive**” was graced by the presence of (from left) Shishir Shil, Professor Nurul Islam Najem, Mohammad Israfil Alam - Hon'ble MP and Chairperson of APPG on Extreme Poverty and Urban Pavement Dwellers, Bangladesh Parliament, Dr . Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury - Hon'ble Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament, Omar Faruk Chowdhury - Hon'ble MP of Bangladesh Parliament, and Promode Mankin - the then State Minister for Social Welfare. Photo: APPG on Extreme Poverty and Urban Pavement Dwellers

Advocacy work within Urban Programme

With the broader objective of establishing pavement and squatter dwellers' rights as citizens of Bangladesh, we are engaged in forums such as Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP), Bangladesh Urban Forum (BUF), Nutrition Working Group (NWG), Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI), and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) as a part of our advocacy work within the Urban Programme.

We have been working with the National Human Rights Commission and the Election Commission of Bangladesh and successfully issued over 300 National ID cards and 4000 Birth Registration Certificates for our participants till date. Additionally, our aim is to bring in changes to the National Identity Registration Act and the City Corporation Ordinance and to ensure that any exclusionary provisions are addressed in policies that impact the lives of pavement and squatter dwellers.

Due to our continued efforts, the DSCC had created a separate budget line in their Annual Budget and assigned BDT 5,00,000 in 2013 for

providing dedicated services to pavement dwellers. Furthermore, they have allocated land to construct 4 drop-in shelters for pavement-dwellers and provided stipends to over 280 children for continuing their formal education.

Additionally, our partners have mobilised resources from the private sector, such as the HSBC Bank which donated over 900 blankets for street-dwellers in 2013.

We have also included numerous issues of pavement dwellers in the National Urban Development Policy, which has been submitted for approval.

Advocacy work within Char Programme

Along with our advocacy partner Unnayan Shamannay and other partner organisations, we have been strengthening the National Char Alliance (NCA) along with its local chapters for more effective advocacy and lobbying aimed at ensuring adequate resources allocation, and also the quantity and quality of basic services for Char dwellers by the government, donors and the private sector.

The NCA has been successful in ensuring allocation of a separate budget for Char dwellers in the National Budget for 2014-2015. They have also been instrumental in mobilizing resources from the private sector - 6,000 school bags, 2,200 solar lamps and 5000 blankets were provided by the Southeast Bank Ltd. in 2013-2014. An additional 13,000 blankets were mobilised from 5 private banks collectively for the cold wave affected families

in December 2013 and in January 2014.

Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh had also allocated over BDT 9.86 million for the installation of agricultural machinery for poor and landless farmers living in chars.

Furthermore, we had ensured that the Char-dwellers' issues were specifically included in Krishi Nitimala (National Agriculture Policy 2010).



Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Advocacy work within Haor Programme

We played a key role in the formation of the Haor Advocacy Platform (HAP) and since then, we have been actively engaged in bringing the issues of Haor dwellers to the centre of debate at the Parliament. As a result of the 2nd National Haor Convention held in November 2012, a budget of around BDT 1 billion was allocated against specific projects

identified in Haor Development Master Plan, while an additional BDT 500 million was allocated for strengthening the Haor Development Board in the National Budget 2013-14. Apart from this, we are working with the APPG on Haor livelihoods to influence other governance structures to ensure quality support to the Haor dwellers.

Advocacy work within Coastal Programme

We are engaged in the Sub-Regional Forum on Community Resilience in Bay of Bengal, and Action Research on Community Adaptation in Bangladesh (ARCAB) as a part of our advocacy efforts within the Coastal programme.

At the meso level, we have created linkages with 12 Union Disaster Management Committees; among which, 7 have allocated funds worth BDT 30,000 on average to implement DRR measures on the basis of community action plans.

Along with our partners, we had jointly organised the “2nd Sub-Regional Workshop on Community Resilience to Climate Change in the Bay of Bengal” in October 2013 at the national level in order to mobilise the resilience charter and

facilitate a collective engagement on policy issues in the UN Conference of Parties on Climate Change.

This was followed by the “2nd Sub-Regional Workshop on Community Resilience” in Khulna to promote collective advocacy agenda in the coastal region.

In addition, the Coastal programme had supported the establishment of an active coordination platform under the SEALS Project Framework of the Forest Department to ensure accountability of key stakeholders on issues regarding the bio-diversity conservation of the Sundarbans. Currently, this process has mobilised a ground to link up the community issues with national level policy agenda.





Photo: Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh

Advocacy work within Disaster Risk Reduction & Response Programme

Along with other members of the NARRI Consortium, Concern Worldwide, Bangladesh had played a key role in drafting the Disaster Management Policy in coordination with Disaster Management and Relief Divisions (DMRD) at the national level.

Through the DIPECHO-VII project, we facilitated the implementation of the Disaster Management policy framework through strong coordination and evidence-based advocacy with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Rehabilitation, and Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

Additionally, we are actively engaged in different clusters- WASH, Shelter, Food Security, Nutrition and Early Recovery, as a part of the overarching Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) framework in Bangladesh. We are also involved with the Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) network, Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP), and Action Research on Community Adaptation in Bangladesh (ARCAB) for implementing collective actions so as to increase the resilience of the project participants across all our programmes in Bangladesh.

Ensuring Quality

We ensure the overall quality of our work with the help of in-house technical experts as well as external consultants as required. In addition to facilitating the development and application of programme based advocacy strategies, we also focus on addressing issues of inequality, risk and vulnerability across our programme interventions.

Additionally, we strongly emphasize on the documentation of our work in Bangladesh and the dissemination of our success stories to all internal and external stakeholders of Concern Worldwide.

Measuring Results

Since monitoring and reporting results is an important part of our work, we have adopted an innovative Digital Data Gathering (DDG) process which enables us to collect, analyse and store quantitative survey data using Android-based mobile technology. Using a cloud-based platform that allows us to gather data more quickly and efficiently than paper based methods, DDG yields data that is both more reliable and of a higher quality and thus, greatly improving the effectiveness of our work.



Donors



Acknowledgements

*Thanks to our Donors & Partners
for their continuous support in
our work in Bangladesh*

Partners



Cover image
by Shehab Uddin, Drik

Previously a pavement-dweller, Rojina (20) has now found refuge at the night-shelter supported by the Amrao Manush project. With our support, she is trying to turn her life around by selling vegetables at the Karwan Bazar market and saving for her future.

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