AN INITIATIVE TO CHANGE THE LIFE AND LIVING OF THE EXTREME POOR
LEARNING FROM
FOOD SECURITY 2012 BANGLADESH - UJJIBITO PROJECT
Implemented by
Food Security 2012 Bangladesh - Ujjibito Project
Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)

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European Union funded `Food Security 2012 Bangladesh-Ujjibito’ is being jointly implemented by Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) and Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) since 2013. The project aims to reduce poverty and improve food security of extreme poor and vulnerable households. The project targets 325000 extreme poor households in Barisal, Khulna, Rajshahi and coastal areas of Chittagong districts.

The project is expected to achieve three major outcomes, which in turn would help to attain the goals. These outcomes mainly trigger sustainable improvement in three aspects of project participant’s i.e. economic wellbeing through establishing sufficient means of livings, health and physical well-being through ensuring nutritional security and social empowerment through active participation in the community events.

PKSF has designed a total of 33 activities to achieve project outcomes. To achieve economic wellbeing of the project participants, the project imparts farm, non-farm training and vocational training. The project also provides advices on low cost agricultural technology, appropriate finance services, social safety nets and supports to demonstrate activities i.e. semi-commercial vegetable gardens, Adarsha Ujjibito Bari. Besides, the project also implements health and nutritional activities i.e. 1000 days intensive health care services to mother and child, regular courtyard session, establish nutrition village at the community and nutrition corner at primary and secondary school level, linkage with local community clinics and Upazila healthcare services. Further, the project arranges courtyard sessions; community events i.e. blood grouping camp and special sessions for adolescent girls to raise awareness different social issues, reproductive health and nutrition’s.
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Providing training through courtyard sessions to develop technical skills of poor families, particularly of women, has become a key element of poverty alleviation programmes in Bangladesh. Women often are unable to take classroom-based training due to their family commitments. The objectives of the training conducted through courtyard sessions are to equip rural women with new skillset and refine their existing knowledge and skills.
COURTYARD SESSIONS ON LIVELIHOOD SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Developing multiple skills for improving livelihoods

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Using traditional technology is one of the reasons for lower productivity on agriculture. Under UPP-Ujjibito project modern technology-based training have been provided to the extreme poor for improving their skills and productivity on agricultural activities. That includes modern homestead vegetable gardening, goat rearing on slate, low cost beef fattening and dairy cattle rearing. Those practical trainings were conducted by relevant government officials and local successful farmers at the doorsteps of extreme poor households.
Using traditional technology is one of the reasons for lower productivity in agriculture. Under the UPP-Ujjibito project, modern technology-based training has been provided to the extremely poor for improving their skills and productivity in agricultural activities. This includes modern homestead vegetable gardening, goat rearing on slate, low-cost beef fattening, and dairy cattle rearing. These practical trainings were conducted by relevant government officials and local successful farmers at the doorsteps of extremely poor households.
Some extreme poor families have some land around their homesteads which is generally remain fallow. They can cultivate at least 3 times in a year. Different types of vegetables are cultivated in Rabi, Kharif-1 and Kharif-2 season using modern technology. Preliminary results showed that homestead gardening does not only contribute their household’s food supply for fulfilling their nutritional demand but also their income by selling extra vegetables after consumption.
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Off-farm training can help to diversify the poor’s livelihoods. Livelihood diversification is a process by which poor households construct a diverse portfolio of activities to improve their standard of living and also used as one of the key strategies for many resource poor to reduce income uncertainties against any vulnerabilities. A wide range of off-farm trainings have been provided to the project participants to increase income, improve food security and reduce vulnerabilities in a sustained manner.
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UPP-Ujjibito

CANE
Provision of vocational training that gives the trainees the opportunities to acquire marketable skills. These productivity-induced skills are appropriate for preparing the participants in the field of trade to engage them in the gainful employment. It therefore brings benefits in generating employment and reducing poverty. The project provided appropriate skills to 1000 youths of extreme poor families and helped them for entering into the growth-oriented job market.
VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO YOUTHS

Providing skills for better employment

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING ELECTRIC HOUSE WIRING

UPP-Ujjibito
VOCATIONAL TRAINING

UPP-Ujjibito
Many vulnerable families depend on insecure and fragile livelihoods. These households are mostly women headed and have members with disability. A slight fluctuations in income make their life harder to maintain a decent standard of living. Transferring a productive asset often helps them to secure their livelihoods. Considering their existing skills and capacities of the most vulnerable families, an asset has been transferred to them for ensuring their continued income and thus smoothening their consumptions.
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ASSET TRANSFER TO VULNERABLE FAMILIES

Promoting ensured income
Multiple sources of income in a poor family tend to reduce poverty, leading to the conclusion that policies should focus on the further diversification of income options for poor households. This has led to the introduction of Model Ujjibito Houses. Such a house must have at least five income generating activities (IGAs), for example, a vermi-compost production plant, a homestead vegetable garden, a chicken/duck/quail farm, cow rearing/beef fattening activities or any other IGA which provides immediate income to the family. Besides, it must have a sanitary latrine and trees around the household. The project encourages owners of Model Ujjibito Houses to add more features to the existing set-up. Most of the houses have vegetables, herbs and shrubs planted around. In some cases, they also have a fish-farming pond, sheds for cows and poultries, and even a small house for pigeons.
UJJIBITO HOUSE

Creating multiple sources of income

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Indigenous livestock is one of the major sources of income of the poor. It is estimated that about 10% animals die annually due to gastrointestinal and parasitic disease. Parasitic infection cause economic loss through lowering the productivity, disease resistance capacity and mortality of animals. To overcome those challenges, livestock belonging to the project participants and project area are regularly vaccinated and dewormed with the help of local livestock offices. So far, 991702 livestock population have been vaccinated and dewormed with the active support from the local livestock officials.
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Government of Bangladesh provides lots of services on crop, livestock and fisheries through local offices. Farmers can easily get different technological advices and input services from those offices. Poor are deprived from these services due to their poor communication ability. This project attempts to establish linkages between the poor and the relevant government officials for increasing access to those services.
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The extreme poor have always been left out from the conventional financial services. They have been victims of self-exclusion, social exclusion and institutional exclusion. The fundamental reason behind this is the socio-economic conditions and the capacity level of the poor. The rigidity of traditional microfinance products often prevents them from participating in the system. Considering all these constraints, PKSF has designed appropriate financial services for the extreme poor. The underlying viewpoint of the programme has two corresponding ground rules: i) microfinance needs to be tailored for the extreme poor, and ii) the extreme poor need to be prepared for microfinance subsequently.
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Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) implemented Rural Employment and Road Maintenance Programme to create year round wage employment for the destitute women. A total of 27400 extreme poor members got this opportunity in two phases. The members received BDT 150 per day for two years for the work and out of which BDT 50 per day is deposited in a bank account as mandatory savings. After the end of the phase, deposited amount is returned to the members. All of these members are received 2 days agricultural training according to their choice from UPP-Ujjibito component. These savings and acquired skills from training the members have contributed to increase their income.
RURAL EMPLOYMENT AND ROAD MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

Creating employment opportunities for the destitute women

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BETTER NUTRITION FOR
FUTURE GENERATION
A "best" buy for economic development

ENSURED PHYSICAL WELL-BEING AND
NUTRITIONAL SECURITY

Bangladesh is classified as having high prevalence of chronic undernutrition. More than six million children are stunted in this country. The rate of stunting, wasting and underweight of under-five children are 36%, 14% and 33% respectively. It has a deterrent effect on national human productivity. This project has been implementing both direct and sensitive nutrition interventions to improve the nutrition situation, particularly for the under-five children, pregnant and lactating mothers.
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Many people do not have adequate knowledge on nutrition and those who have some knowledge do not practice it well in their daily life. Regular counselling can play key roles in enhancing nutrition-related knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP). The objectives of these sessions are to conduct regular community dialogue to engage community members, particularly women and adolescent girls, for extending their understanding on different aspects of nutrition. A courtyard session is conducted for a batch of 20 participants. They generally meet once a month.
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The first 1,000 days of life -- the time spanning roughly between the conception and the second birthday of a child-- is a unique period of opportunity when the foundations of optimum health, growth and neurodevelopment across the lifespan are established. The right nutrition during this 1,000 day window has a profound impact on a child’s ability to grow, learn and thrive, and a lasting effect on a nation’s health and prosperity. The impact of poor nutrition early in life has lasting effects that can transcend generations. The economic benefits for 1000 Days Nutrition Actions therefore are well recognised.
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High school students between the age of 11 and 16 need special care that will foster their leadership qualities and prepare them to meet the challenges of the future. To make them healthier and more responsible as future leaders, these forums provide them with a set of skills by transferring knowledge on educational achievements, behavioural health and personal hygiene, adolescent health and nutrition, emotional health, future career choices and community engagement.
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Bangladesh needs to implement an urgent national plan of action to reduce the rate of stunting from 36 per cent in [missing year] to [missing year] per cent by 2030. The ‘Community-Based Nutrition (CBA)’ approach might be one of the ways to do it. Nutrition Villages have been established to sensitize the communities on nutrition through both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. The objectives of this initiative are to make nutrition a priority agenda for families and communities, and also to broaden their understanding about nutrition for making a difference in their lives.
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The trained project staff (paramedic) have been providing door to door intensive services to pregnant women and lactating mothers, <5 children and adolescent girls. They refer the identified ‘Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)’ children to the nearest government facilities, such as upazila and district hospitals. The project staff have been developed a strong linkage with the service providers of community clinics and other public health facilities. That created an environment where the extreme poor get the priority services.
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Women empowerment is being perceived in this project, like many others, as a process whereby women become able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to assert their independent right to make choices and to control resources which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination. This project has taken initiatives to enhance their human dignity by extending to them necessary services and creating an enabling environment so that they can increase their income and voice within their families and the societies.
WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Working together for better life

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Adolescent Girls’ Clubs have been instrumental to promoting adolescent girls’ wellbeing, changing the gender norms that constrain their lives and broadening their horizons to become conscious about their future. These clubs have been established to empower girls by giving them access to information about their rights, educating them of their responsibilities towards the society, providing them life skills for improving their self-confidence and negotiating skills to establish their rights.
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Community events engage the rural people to make aware of their rights. These events are involved with the activities of social, gender and empowerment, food and nutrition, health issues. Blood grouping and health camps are also being organized for pregnant women, lactating mother and adolescent girls in some cases.
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