Multi Country South Asia Global Fund Program (MSA)
Reducing the impact of HIV on men who have sex with men and transgender populations in South Asia

2016
JULY- DECEMBER

Dhaka, Bangladesh
Half Yearly Report of MSA Grant | July-December, 2016
Multi-country South Asia Global Fund HIV Program (MSA) is one of the key project of Bandhu which focuses on Community System Strengthening (CSS) and Policy Advocacy in Bangladesh. A total of 25 Community Based Organizations (CBO) formed in Bangladesh so far where Bandhu provided technical assistance to develop their minimum capacity under this project. In order to showcasing its periodic significant achievement to other partners and multiple stakeholders, Bandhu regularly produces half yearly report and this time Bandhu is very much pleased to publish its half yearly report of MSA project (July - December 2016).

During this reporting period, we conducted high level advocacy programs with National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), National Legal Aid Service Organization (NLASO). Orientation for Government physicians on Stigma package in collaboration with different Civil Surgeon Offices, arrange three months Media Fellowship program with journalists, organized divisional level consultation with local influential were another key achievements of Bandhu.

Ain-Alap - the legal helpline corner of Bandhu has meaningfully contributed to the legal needs of the community and successfully settled a number of rights violation cases and referred to National Human Rights Commission and District Level Lawyers Group. In addition, Bandhu organized different need based trainings for CBOs and external stakeholders.

It was all possible with the Team effort and dedication of MSA project staffs along with timely and appropriate guideline, suggestions and feedbacks of Executive Director, Directors (Program and Finance) of Bandhu and UNDP BRH which deserves sincere applaud and Thanks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCC</td>
<td>Behavior Change Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSS</td>
<td>Behavioral Surveillance Study</td>
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<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Executive Committee</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSRC</td>
<td>Gender and Sexuality Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFATM</td>
<td>Global Fund for AIDS, TB, and Malaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOB</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>HMIS</td>
<td>Health Management Information System</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KABP</td>
<td>Knowledge, Attitude, Behavior and Practices (Survey)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MESST</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation System Strengthening Tools</td>
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<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<td>MSM</td>
<td>Men who have Sex with Men</td>
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<td>MSW</td>
<td>Male Sex Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>National AIDS Committee</td>
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<td>NASP</td>
<td>National AIDS/STD Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSP</td>
<td>National Strategic Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLHIV</td>
<td>People Living with HIV/AIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRHR</td>
<td>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>STD</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Disease(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>STI</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infection(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TG</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Fund for Population Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNGASS</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly Special Session (on HIV/AIDS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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MSA PROJECT: At a Glance
JULY to DECEMBER 2016

CBO’s Capacity Building and Advocacy Program
by MSA Project of Bandhu

We trained **77** people including

- **22** External Stakeholders
- **55** Emergent CBOs and in country downstream partners

**Legal Support**

- **303** Calls received and provided legal information, counselling and support
- **29** Cases received on human rights violation
- **4** Referred to lawyers and legal aid providing organization
- **2** Investigation

**Advocacy Meeting**
with **471** GO/NGO Stakeholders including

- **128** Legal aid providers and participants of human rights based organizations
- **42** Journalists of print and electronic media
- **40** Participants of Govt. Hospitals including civil surgeon, residential medical officers, upazilla health officers and family planning officer
- **114** Local Elected Bodies (LEB) including City Mayor, Ward Counsellors, Governmental officials, counsellors of City Corporation, civil surgeon representative, social welfare representative, development organization’s representative
- **48** Emergent CBOs and in country downstream partners
- **99** Participants from CBOs, Social Welfare Department and CSOs, GO and NGO officials
CAPACITY BUILDING
TRAINING FOR EMERGENT CBOs

TRAINING ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR CBO PERSONNEL

In Bangladesh, the major focus of the MSA program is COMMUNITY SYSTEM STRENGTHENING (CSS) and for this Bandhu initiated number of activities since phase I. The training program for emergent CBOs and in-country downstream partners is one of the key activities where representatives of 25 CBOs attend the training program. During the reporting period (July-December 2016), Bandhu arranged one need based training on Financial Management.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME:

- 10 CBOs have organized their Annual General Meeting (AGM) with proper financial documentation.
- Participants acknowledged the importance of the training and obtained clear conception regarding cash book and other financial issues according to their need. All CBOs are now maintaining required financial documents as per policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training for Emergent CBOs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Test Score</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Test Score</td>
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COMMUNITY SYSTEM STRENGTHENING (CSS)

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS AND BANDHU STAFFS

TRAINING WITH THE DISTRICT LEVEL LAWYERS GROUP (DLLG) ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LAWS RELATED TO SOGI POPULATION

A training session on Human Rights and National & International laws related to SOGI population was held from 28-29 October, 2016 at MSA Office, Siddeswari, Dhaka, where a total of 22 DLLG members attended the training. The major purpose of this training was to increase the knowledge level on human rights and sharing the contemporary development in national and international arena about gender diversified population as they are serving the beneficiaries at local area.

At the end of the session the participants were well informed about the regional development about this community, international human rights law and also gained basic knowledge on UPR and gender diversity population, Ain-Alap case dealing experiences and various challenges on litigation process about Hijra community.
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME:

- Participants are now well informed about the regional development, international human rights law and also gained basic knowledge of UPR and gender diversified population, AIN-ALAP case dealing experiences and various challenges on litigation process about Hijra community.
- Build strong network amongst DLLG members
- Commitment to deal the cases with high priority
- Participants developed organizational and personal security plan for future preventive measure.
- Attended practical session on stress management and coping strategy, able to identify their stress following individual activity, role and responsibility during threats and safety measurements to protect organization as well as individuals.
- A total of 77 participants from three different tire including beneficiaries, stakeholders and Bandhu staffs gathered knowledge on expected titled training.

The pre-test average score was 51% and post test average score was 85% that indicates that they have improved their skills and knowledge through the training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training with the DLLG on Human rights and national and international laws related to SOGI population</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Test Score</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Test Score</strong></td>
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Capacity Building for External Stakeholders and Bandhu Staffs
TRAINING ON SAFETY AND SECURITY

A three-day long training on Safety and Security was conducted from 6-8, December 2016 at PMO, Siddeshwari, Dhaka, where a total of 30 Bandhu Staffs attended. The key purpose of this training was to give clear understanding on safety and security and mapping organizational security and safety for further strategy. The contents of the training were: reasons of personal stress, capacity strategy with the stress, techniques to protect harm in the future, disseminations of safety and security, differences between Security, Risk, Threat, Capacity and Vulnerability, Assessing Threats and Risk, Risk assumption, Develop Security Plan, cyber crime and violence, preventing cyber violence.

As an output of the training, participants were able to differentiate between Threats, Risk, Security, Capacity and Vulnerability, learnt how to assess major risk on specific issue, the participants can use different strategy for reducing personal stress, they learnt on how to cope up with the stress and anger and prepared organizational security plan.

The pre-test average score was 57% and post test average score was 91% that indicate they have improved their skills and knowledge.
COMMUNITY SYSTEM STRENGTHENING (CSS)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ACHIEVE MINIMUM CAPACITY AND MONITORING VISIT

MSA team of Bandhu regularly visits different CBOs and so far arranged 04 (Four) field visits in 04 different CBOs as a part of Technical Assistance. During this visit, Bandhu team assisted them to develop and review different Guidelines including Financial, HR and Monitoring, provided on-spot technical assistance as per their need, followed up documentation process, developed/reviewed time and action oriented Capacity Development Plan (CDP), also supported on their finance-related issues with the support of MSA finance team.

The following technical supports were given throughout the period

- Reviewed the progress of the implemented activities and updated documentation process
- Identified the area for minimum capacity and develop Capacity Development Plan (CDP) for individual CBOs
- Assisted to develop two strategic plans of Siri Shomaj Kollayan Shongho, Jamalpur and Diner Alo Hijra Shangha, Rajshai.
- Provided support to develop a organizational organ gram
- Assistance provided to review and develop M&E guideline and HR Admin guideline
COMMUNITY SYSTEM STRENGTHENING (CSS)

- Provided support to prepare referral directory
- Assisted to file up all documents
- Provided on the job training on financial, programmatic and M&E issues
- Regular guideline was provided to implement monthly work plan
- Development of Action Plan according to work plan
- Assistance provided to prepare monthly and quarterly report according to prescribed format of Bandhu.
- Necessary support ensured to practice good governance through conducting regular EC meeting, Annual General Meeting (AGM) and dissemination of reports/meeting notes with EC members.
- Guidance provided on how to monitor good governance systems
  - Assist to organize EC election, Annual general meeting involving local influential members.
- Reviewed and updated of all the necessary existing information of their finance related issues.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME:

- Two different Strategic Plan of two individual CBOs (Siri Shomaj Kollayan Shongho, Jamalpur and Diner Alo Hijra Shangha, Rajshai have been developed
- Service providing organizations are sensitized at local level and providing supports according to need of the community

- Regularly arranging local level advocacy event with influential local stakeholders
- Completing monthly activities according to target
- Conducting regular EC meeting following the Constitutions of individual CBOs
- Strengthening referral mechanism with other health service providing organizations through meetings
- Following HR, M&E and Financial guidelines in their day to day activities
- Practicing Good Governance and organizing Annual General meeting and EC election as per need
COMMUNITY SYSTEM STRENGTHENING (CSS)

REGULAR ACTIVITIES OF CBOs

In 2016, Bandhu started working on CBO Sustainability and Resource Mobilization. For this, Bandhu has made necessary agreement with 12 potential CBOs in 2016 and providing all kind of supports including developing and implementing individual business plan. Under this agreement, the selected CBOs also accomplished following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organize regular monthly meeting</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrange Bi Weekly group session for community people</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct counseling session</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer client to other organization for stigma free health services</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Coordination Meeting</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Govt. Organization</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate DC Office Meeting</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Plan and Implementation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual General Meeting</td>
<td>12</td>
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IMPLEMENTATION OF BUSINESS PLAN AND PERIODIC UPDATES

As a part of sustainability and resource mobilization plan, Bandhu selected 12 potentials CBOs and assisted them to develop business plan. Among 12 Business Plan, three CBOs have started their small scale business with limited amount that was managed by the EC members of respective CBOs. The business updates of July-December 2016 is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of CBOs</th>
<th>Total Investment (BDT)</th>
<th>Total profit (BDT)</th>
<th>Grand /Net profit (BDT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dener Alo Hijra Shangho-Rajshahi</td>
<td>71,000</td>
<td>1,09,500</td>
<td>38,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shapla Hijra / MSM Unnayan Shongothon-Sherpur</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siri Samaj Kallyan Shangho- Jamalpur</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>2,40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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Community System Strengthening and Advocacy Seed Funding

Bandhu launched Seed Fund Grant in Nov 2015 and for this Bandhu already made agreement with 11 CBOs. The six months project has been completed in June 2016. However, according to recommendation of UNDP-BRH (ref: July 2016) Bandhu decided to continue seed fund grant with Padda Kuri Hijra Sangha, Dhaka only from August 2016 to November 2016.

According to activity plan, Padda Kuri CBO completed the following tasks:

- A total of 30 Hijra participants participated in the Life Skill training. The pre-test average score was 60% and post test average score was 90% that indicate they have improved their skills and knowledge.
- 28 awareness sessions on different topics were organized and 335 community participants attended.
- 39 counseling session was organized for Hijra clients
- 34 clients were referred to other organizations for different services
Development of Strategic Plan under Minimum Capacity

A number of 2 Strategic Plans were developed for Siri Shomaj Kollayan Shongho and Diner Alo Hijra Shongho CBOs as a part of minimum capacity and Bandhu provided all kind of Technical Assistance to make it finalized. Each Strategic Plans were developed for three years (2017-2019) following all systematic procedures and steps.
DIVISIONAL LEVEL CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL CBOs, SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND CSOs

Bandhu organized two (2) Divisional Level Consultation Meetings in collaboration with local CBOs under Chittagong and Jamalpur district on 17th August and 5th November 2016 respectively. A total of 98 guests attended in both the meetings representing different GO and NGOs includes District Commissioner (DC) office, Civil Surgeon Office, Social Welfare Department, Office of Women Affairs, members of STI/AIDS Network, local Media Houses, Faith leaders, Teachers, Lawyers, CBO members and other influential of the society.

The objectives of the program were:

- To build the capacity of CBOs through arranging local advocacy program that will ultimately help them to contribute in national response of HIV prevention.
- To create an opportunity for accessing stigma and non-discrimination free services from key stakeholders at divisional/district level and building effective networks with GO, NGO for need-based support.

Honorable State Minister, District Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Jamalpur district attended the event.
Agreed action items for follow up:

- BRAC, a renowned NGO introduced their TB program to the community and offered them to get free treatment for future reference.

- The documentary film titled “Will This Change” that was produced by Bandhu is the best tools for advocacy at local level and can be shown in public place to create mass awareness in future. As pilot basis, the documentary film “will this change” will be shown at the all schools of Comilla.-commitment made by Mrs. Rasheda Akter, Head Teacher, Comilla Zilla School.

- As teachers of any educational institutions is the most respectable person, so Bandhu can arrange meeting with school authorities in different districts and request students to play as Change Maker. Moral value is very important for all human being and Hijra/TG should not force anyone to collect money from public place.

- Should include Hijra people in job oriented work for their sustainable life.

- Parent’s role is to ensure all kind of support to raise them up despite any gender identity. Hijra are also the citizen of Bangladesh, so they should not discriminated due to their Gender Identity only.

- District Health Services under Comilla district will provide any kind of health support to the community on Every Saturday.

- After death sometime religious leaders are not eager to complete the funeral rituals for Hijra community. As a result, Hijra community faces significant level of discrimination during the situation.

- So Bandhu can take lead to arrange sensitization program with Religious Leaders involving respective Ministry and authorities.

- “50 Hijra’s will be given taka 5 lac.”-commitment made by Mrs. Hasina Morshed, Deputy Director, Department of Social Welfare, Comilla.

- Women & Children Welfare Department under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs at local level can help the Hijra people by including district level training course on tailoring, beautification and so on.

- Media can play strong role for making a positive society for Hijra against all forms of stigma and discriminations towards Hijra.

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ADVOCACY MEETING WITH NATIONAL LEGAL AID SERVICE ORGANIZATION (NLASO)

Bandhu organized two (2) consultation meetings with National Legal Aid Services Organization (NLASO) titled ‘Ensuring legal support for Third Gender (Hijra) community’ on 18th September, 2016 at the conference room of National Legal Aid Services Organization and ‘Inclusion of Third Gender (Hijra) in Government legal Aid service’ on 16th November, 2016 at NLASO conference with National Legal Aid Services Organization. A total of 47 guests attended the meeting representing Honorable Director of NLASO, Malik Abdullah Al-Amin, Sr. District Judge chaired the events.

The purposes of these two (2) events were:

- To discuss about the rights violation situation of third gender across the country and also find out possible opportunity on how NLASO (National Legal Aid Services Organization) can extend its support towards this community.
- To review the National Legal Aid Act’ 2000 and find out possible area to provide Government Legal Aid Support for third gender (Hijra).

Mohammad Al-Amin Matubbar, Deputy Director of NLASO facilitated the event and provided an analysis on the National Legal Aid Services act’2000 where third gender can be included.

A thorough review on the Act was presented by the Deputy Director, NLASO, and recommended that a slight amendment can be useful to provide legal support to the third gender community under this Act. He also introduced the legal aid application form to the participants and mentioned that if third gender category can be added along with male, female and child category, it will ensure access to apply third gender community under government legal aid services. Though in the National Legal Aid Act 2000 there is no mention about third gender community but they deserve to receive legal aid services under this Act and NLASO can play a vital role in this regard.
Agreed action items for follow up:

- Legal Aid Officers can be trained and educated on sexual and gender diverse issue with concurrent national and international development
- Bandhu and NLASO can take joint initiative to strengthen legal counseling support through help line.
- Some educational materials on legal literacy can be produced as joint initiatives and disseminated.
- Third Gender option along with male and female can be included in National Legal Aid application form.
- Legal Aid Service Act, 2000 can be reviewed in order to include Hijra community under this
- A board meeting will be held at NLASO where the issues around inclusion of third gender in the legal aid application form will be discussed
- District Legal aid officers should be oriented about the community and their needs and concern so that they can provide support to the community
- NLASO will engage the community representatives in their upcoming National Legal Aid day celebration. Act.

In the meeting, community person also shared their challenges in seeking legal support. It can be improved by inviting district level legal aid officers in future programs so that they can also learn and oriented about the community needs and concern.

It is experienced that in order to access to justice judges are very crucial stakeholder. It is not always possible to involve judges in public programs or any other activities. NLASO can be very useful platform by which judges can be oriented about the community and improve the situation of access to justice for third gender community in our country. The meetings were very successful and all NLASO officials and staffs were very cooperative.
Day long orientation program with the Govt. Physicians under Civil Surgeon

A total of two (2) orientation programs on Stigma Package were held on 4\textsuperscript{th} September 2016 and 24\textsuperscript{th} November 2016 under Civil Surgeon Office, Chittagong and Dhaka where 40 participants including Civil Surgeon, Deputy Civil Surgeon, Assistant Surgeon, Sr. Consultant from General Hospital, Medical Officers and Upzila Health and Family Planning Officers (UHFPO) of different districts joined the program.

The purposes of these two (2) events were:

- To introduce “Stigma Package” to Govt. Health Service Providers that is already been endorsed by the National Technical Committee as National Package
- To create an opportunity and access to get health care support through respective Government Medical Officers and service centers.
- To understand about MSM/Hijra health needs issues and provide necessary assistance to avail proper health services.
The major contents of the session were:

- Introduction & overview on MSM and TG for Context Building
- HIV among MSM and Transgender people in Asia
- Understanding the complexities of MSM, Transgender people and HIV
- Needs, risks and competing priorities that impact on health-seeking behaviour
- HIV treatment, care and support
- Management issues in the delivery of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support
- Using laws and policies to strengthen the enabling environment.

Agreed action items for follow up:

- Need to disseminate the national size estimation of key population report for clear understanding on gender diversity population size and situation across the country.
- Need to establish non-judgmental health care set-up for the gender diversity population in our society through increasing awareness and joint initiatives.
- Need to arrange same kind of training for other medical professionals and students for getting more understanding about HIV/AIDS and its implication.
- Commitment made by the participants to be more dedicated and supportive towards the community.
MEDIA ADVOCACY FORUM MEETING

Bandhu formed a media advocacy forum in 2014 and meet regularly to share the periodic updates. The 7th Media Advocacy Forum Meeting was held on Saturday, 20 August 2016 at MSA project office where a total of 9 participants joined the meeting.

**Agreed action items for follow up:**

- Bandhu will share the circular of upcoming Media Fellowship program with all forum members for their circular at respective media houses.
- Any interested applicant may apply for Bandhu Media Fellowship 2016 as per RFP (already circulated in National newspaper and Bandhu web site) but the final content will be selected by the Advisors/Juries to avoid duplication of topics and better outcome. To be impartial, the lottery methods can be applied during selection of the contents.
- To produce a good quality report/article, Bandhu may offer mentorship to old fellows which may guide new fellows to Mentor properly.
- Considering the ongoing country situation, the media forum suggested Bandhu to analyze the overall situation and take steps accordingly. For this, other sexual minority population might be less covered by the media for the time being. Bandhu may highlights only TG and Hijra issue considering the political climax.
- Need to arrange regular knowledge generating program in larger scale. So that other journalist can attend beside Forum Members.

Bandhu will share the call for article and collect write up from the forum members for quarterly news letter of Bandhu.

- The forum members will arrange a meeting with Parliamentarian Steering Committee members to discuss the allocation of Budget for Hijra Livelihood Program, implementing by Ministry of Social Welfare. The convener of media forum is responsible to carry out this event in assistance with Mr. Arafat, NTV. The proposed time for the meeting is after Eid-Ul Azha. The preferred place is Media House, Social Welfare Ministry. The discussion points of the meeting are: “Effectiveness of the livelihood program” and “Involvement of the Hijra Community in the program”
ORIENTATION AND CLOSING CEREMONY OF MEDIA FELLOWSHIP

Bandhu announced its 6th Media Fellowship’2016 and a total of 10 journalists were awarded for three months Fellowship Program. For this, an orientation session was organized from 14-15 October 2016 at HOPE Centre, Savar, Dhaka.

Orientation on Media Fellowship 2016 took place from 14-15 October 2016 at HOPE Center, Savar, Dhaka. The purpose of this event was to bring together all media fellows in one place and orient them on their fellowship task as well as sensitize on the community issues before fellowship assignments. A total of 13 persons including Mentors attended this orientation event.

Throughout the orientation meeting, all the fellows received clear direction on their individual fellowship task and were introduced with Bandhu’s mission, vision and overall interventions. In addition interview with the community helped them to clear their perceptions about Hijra’s tradition, culture, livelihood, rights, etc.

However, after three months assignment Bandhu organized Media Fellowship Award Ceremony on 18th December, 2016 at A S Mahmud Seminar Hall, The Daily Star, 64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka. A total of 68 participants attended from different print, online news portal, electronic houses along with NGO, INGO and community representatives.
Professor Dr. Md. Golam Rahman, Chief Information Commissioner, Bangladesh Information Commission, Dhaka, Bangladesh attended as Chief Guest. This program announced the closing of the media fellowship officially through acknowledging their efforts and disseminating the reports of fellowship, crests and certificates.

Professor Dr. Md. Golam Rahman, Chief Information Commissioner, Information Commission Bangladesh said many projects and various actions have been taken in order to support and bring the third gender into the mainstream society. So the mainstream society mainly consisting of male and female are yet to be sensitized with the term third gender.

**Agreed action items for fellowship:**

- Need to highlight the unexpressed sufferings of the Hijra/TG and MSM community more often in the print and electronic media, so that people can change their attitude towards themselves.
- Arrange more and frequent events involving Members of Parliament (MP), so that they have the correct notions on the needs of the sexual minority population which will in turn facilitate in bringing this agenda in the parliament for processing next course of action.
- Need to involve the short film makers in the program highlighting the Hijra community positively.
- Involve current and old media fellows in program activities of Bandhu as much as possible so that, they will continue to have right knowledge and correct information’s, which they can be able to contribute in reducing stigma and discrimination in the society through reports and their write-up.
ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

CONVENE NATIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) MEETING

The Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting was held in 29th September 2016 at MSA conference room, PMO, Siddeshwari, Dhaka which was preside by Meghna Guha Thakurta, Honorable Member of National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh and new chair of the TWG committee. The key objective of this meeting was to discuss about the overall challenges and need assessment of the community members and exploring opportunities of working more closely and effectively with the committee members. A total of 14 participants attended in the meeting and contributed in the discussion very interactively. In the meeting, all members decided to select Co Chair from the members and Mohuya Liya Falia, Sr. Program Manager, Manusher Jonno Foundation has been selected as the Co Chair of the committee to facilitate the session smoothly.

Agreed actions items for follow up:

- Organize media talk show with the support of TWG member in different electronic media where Hijra community member can anchor or talk as panelist.
- Arrange short session with different media for proper orientation on Hijra issue. This initiative will help to sensitize media people at all level thus help them to reduce stigma and discrimination in the society.
- Strengthen the network with relevant stakeholders in response to combat terrorism and protection the rights of marginalized community under NHRC leadership.
- Organize consultation meeting with Law Enforcement Agency (LEA), specifically Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) in order to sensitize them and seeking protection in case of any emergency threats or incidents in coming days.
- Communicate and follow up with the National Text Book and Curriculum (NCTB) to incorporate Hijra issue in supplementary reading materials and Teachers training Manuals as committed earlier.

- Need to conduct Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with the community members who received trainings and grants from the Ministry of Social Welfare under Livelihood Program. This FGD finding will be helpful for all relevant stakeholders to design more effective program for Hijra Community. Based on the FGD findings, Bandhu may plan to arrange dialogue session with Social Welfare Departments soon.
- Involve local organization in terms of nomination for Hijra livelihood training and strong monitoring can be arranged to avoid any kind of challenges.
CONSIDURATION MEETING ON ANTI DISCRIMINATORY LAW

National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh and Bandhu Social Welfare Society jointly organized a consultation meeting titled ‘Draft Anti- Discrimination Act and Way Forward’ on 5th December 2016. A total of 67 participants attended from different organizations, lawyers, judges, journalists, human rights activists and community representatives. Participants actively contributed and shared their experiences on the discussion topics.

The overall objective of this consultation was to share the draft law among the participants and formulate the strategies in fostering the process of enactment. The key objectives were to review the Draft Anti- Discrimination Act, share the updated collective recommendations on Draft Anti- Discrimination Act from different civil society organizations, Identify the barriers and challenges related to the draft law and formulate solid strategies for passing this law.

National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh and Law Commission came up with an umbrella draft law titled ‘Anti-Discrimination Act’ where different organization (i.e. Nagorik Uddyog, Manusher Jonno Foundation, BLAST, Bandhu and other civil society organizations) worked closely with a view to protect the rights of most marginalized community in the country. The draft law was shared for further recommendations and submitted to the law ministry in 2014.

Since then a series of consultations took place and recommendations from these consultations were sent to the law ministry for necessary consideration. Bandhu Social Welfare Society has actively participated in all the consultations and experienced a dire need for this law to protect the rights of third gender.
The Government recognition of ‘Hijra’ as third gender in 2013 has unveiled a new horizon for this community but unfortunately this community remains excluded and vulnerable to enjoy their basic rights. Therefore specific legal protection for this community becomes very essential.

Kazi Reazul Haque, Honorable Chairman, National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh, Sudipto Mukerjee, Country Director, UNDP Bangladesh, Md. Nazrul Islam, Full time Member of National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh graced the event. In addition, prominent lawyers, academicians and journalists also made their remarks on needs for specific laws for this marginalized community and also stressed on implementation of the laws properly.

**Agreed action items for follow up:**

- Immediate enactment and implementation of Anti Discrimination Law should be ensured
- Conflict between personal law and draft Anti-Discrimination should be resolved
- Enhance the capacities of NHRC by amending NHRC Act 2009 in expanding investigation power
- Investigation related to discrimination cases should be made by NHRC
- Make a ‘Schedule’ describing the areas of investigation
- Investigation process under Anti-Corruption Commission can be followed where investigation is done solely by the Commission and then send the report to the magistrate.
- Need to establish Anti-discrimination Court in every district
- Rules should be made immediately after enactment of the Act in order to ensure proper implementation of the law
- Awareness program should be launched particularly among the beneficiaries on the Act including transgender and other excluded minorities
ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

ANNUAL COORDINATION AND PROGRAM SHARING MEETING

Bandhu organized an external stakeholder meeting on 15th December 2016 at MSA project office, 62/A, Siddeswari, Ramna, Dhaka. A total of 73 participants from likeminded organization, different NGO(s), INGO(s), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), media houses attended the program. The major objective of this event was to introduce Bandhu annual program and significant achievements with multi-stakeholders. Through this initiative, participants got a holistic view about Bandhu that will work as social capital for Bandhu for strategy & planning in future.
LEGAL SUPPORT THROUGH AIN ALAP
**DOCUMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION CASES**

During this period a total of 25 Human Rights Violation cases were received through Ain Alap. The geographical area and nature of cases are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Complaints</th>
<th>Types of Incident</th>
<th>Action taken by Ain-Alap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>Verbal and Sexual abuse</td>
<td>Legal Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittagong</td>
<td>Threat and blackmailing</td>
<td>Follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shunamganj</td>
<td>Physical torture and attack</td>
<td>Collected supporting documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirajganj</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>Referred to DLLG members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narayanganj</td>
<td>Monetary dispute</td>
<td>Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
<td>Marital dispute</td>
<td>Documentation of complaints in prescribed format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamalpur</td>
<td>Murder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandpur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cases were recorded from 8 districts of the country. Most of the cases were related to serious violation of rights. Among these cases legal counseling was given to all, two investigations were related to murder and domestic violence and four cases were referred to DLLG members. Beside these, seven cases are under follow up process.
A total of 268 calls were received from July-December 2016 which was mostly related to information, discrimination, violence, harassment, etc. Necessary Counseling and information was provided by the Ain-Alap based on needs.
DISTRICT LEVEL LAWYERS GROUP INTO THE DISTRICT LEGAL AID PANEL THROUGH LOBBYING AND MEETING WITH LAWYERS AND JUDGES IN THE RESPECTIVE JUDGE COURT

Bandhu Social Welfare Society aims to provide legal support to the sexual minority population and established District Level Lawyers Group (DLLG) in 19 districts who are committed to provide legal support for free to the community. With a view to extend this support, the lawyers recommended to include them in the district legal aid panel, so that the community can also be exempted from court fee or other cost. For this a meeting was called on 15th Nov at Narshindi Judge Court. The objective of this meeting was to find out possible opportunities and information to provide legal support to the Third Gender (Hijra) community through District Legal Aid Service and their panel lawyers.

Agreed actions items for follow up:
- National Legal Aid Service Organization (NLASO) needs to issue a letter to all the District Legal Aid Offices urging to provide legal assistance to the Third Gender (Hijra)
- Involve self identified youth community members more often in various awareness program and activities so that they can play a vital role as a change maker among the community
- Legal aid application form can be reviewed by inserting Third Gender/Hijra along with male and female
- Lawyers and NGOs can work together to help the community member in collecting legal identification card, e.g. National ID card, passport, certificate etc.
- Emphasized on family counseling and mental health issues of the community Panel lawyers are ready to deal any complaints made by the Hijra member free of cost under legal aid service
Shujon gave loan to Rojob ali almost a year back. When he started asking for money back, Rojob denied to return the money and attacked Shujon with some of his friends. Shujon got severely injured and filed case at Tahirpur thana with the help of Shirajul islam, Watchdog member. Later, this case forwarded to the court and duly referred to advocate Moloy Chokroborthy Raju who is a member of District Level Lawyer Group (DLLG). This case is waiting for next hearing.

Hridoy is a community member and one night, he received a call from a person who is introduced himself as police officer, Detective Branch. The officer asked him to meet for some inquiry which seems unusual. Hridoy got scared and communicated with Ain-Alap for advice. Ain-Alap team communicated with Advocate Shawpan Kumar Dev, District Level Lawyer Group (DLLG) member of respective zone and referred the complaints to have a close look into the matter and extend legal support if needed. Shawpan Kumar has followed up with the respective police station and authority in charge but no such evidence has found so far.
Haider Hijra went to her village to celebrate Eid-Ul-Ajha on 10.9.16 along with Sohana and Shahin from Dhaka by a micro bus. Around 3:00 am on 15.09.16, 7 unknown people entered into the house with deadly weapons and threatened everyone to kill if they shout. They beat Haider with a metal rod and tied up everyone in the house. After that they brutally chopped and slaughtered Haider with machetes and left the place immediately. This case was referred to the District level lawyer’s group member, Mr. Nurul Amin who is a learned senior lawyer at Jamalpur Judge Court. A regular follow up is ongoing with lawyer and Ain-Alap team.

Roksana is a Hijra community member resides at Sonarga, Narayanganj. She got married in 2012 as a female and lived happily with her husband. Recently her husband asked money from her otherwise threatened her to leave the house. Roksana could not manage the money, so her husband left her and married another girl. In this situation, Ain-Alap unit with the help of district level lawyers’ group member Biva Rani, filed a case to the Narayanganj district court. A warrant has been issued by the court and the police is looking for the perpetrator. Continuous follow up is maintained regarding this case.
CASE INVESTIGATION AND INSTANT SUPPORT

FACT AND FINDINGS

Md. Tipu Mojumder (Santa) from Sultansahi, Gogalgongj is a community member and faces severe discrimination for being hijra by her family members. Vigorous aggression which includes domestic violence, forceful eviction from the dwelling house, deprivation of right to property and money, threats to kill and obscenities by her brother which made her life impatient and difficult to survive.

Santa is the youngest one amongst 3 brothers and 2 sisters. Her parents passed away and left their property and savings for their children. After joining with the hijra group, she has changed her lifestyle and forced by the family to change herself. She was even locked up by her family in the house and threatened to deprive her from all the property and savings money. As a consequence, her brother and others tortured her and abandoned her from the family and also forced her to leave the house. She claimed her portion from the property and wanted to live a peaceful life without any discrimination or threat and secure her identity as third gender.

Instant assistance provided by the Ain-Alap team:

During this investigation, Ain-Alap team met with the local person and neighbors to collect authentic information on the complaints. Next they met with the local authority, Chairman of that area and discussed the matter in details. With the support of local chairman, they visited the house of complainant and also met with the family members. Finally with a long discussion, it has been concluded that Santa can stay in her house which she got from her father and she may start a small business (if wishes), in that case a shop will be given for free to run the small business by his elder brother. Furthermore, they have committed not to make any barrier on Santa’s movement or staying at the village.
FACT OF HAIDER HIJRA CASE

Hider Hijra from Porar chor, Islampur, Jamalpur is a Hijra community member, aged 45 years old, murdered on 15 September, 2016. A case has been filed at Islampur police station ref (no. 9, sec 302/34 PC) on 15.9.16 by Alecha Begum. Presently this case is under process at Jamalpur court. Ref (235(2)16). Sanwar Hossain, Sub Inspector of Islampur thana has been given the responsibility to look after the case.

Instant Action taken by Bandhu Team:

- Arifa Islam Mouri, President, Siri Shomaj Kollayan Songstha, a partner CBO of Bandhu visited the victim’s house, family members and police super office and collected information.
- Organized human chain with local organization and community representatives on 20th September, 2016.
- Watchdog member (front line community member and human rights defender) of Bandhu, Mr. Aynal organized meetings with community members and communicated with the local media and Ain-alap unit regularly.
- Appointed Advocate Nurul Amin who is a member of District Level Lawyers Group (DLLG) at Jamalpur court to look after the case.

- Meeting with Additional Police Super, Ms. Rawnak Islam to know the progress of the case and establish networking with Mouri Hijra for time to time follow up.
- Follow up with investigation officer, Sanwar Hossain and circle ASP Samiul Hossain about the case.
- Meeting with the lawyers group and seek assistance and advice for further legal steps.
**Spotlight 1**

Md. Shahidul Abser (40), a member of sexual and gender diverse community bought 3 decimal of land in 2015 but his neighbor land owner named restricted him to take possession of the land by using local power and force and threaten him to vacate the land. Finally, with the support from Ain-Alap unit, the Ward Counselor of Cox’s Bazar on that area considered the matter seriously and took steps against this injustice. He organized a meeting with both parties next day and mediated the dispute. He also facilitated the possession of the land in favor of Absar and ensured his presence while Absar put walls around the land to secure his rightful property (Soft version of Spotlight is uploaded in Bandhu website)

**Spotlight 2**

Rasel is a community member who was arrested by the local police wrongfully and deliberately with the accusation of member of robbery group. However, after receiving the complaint, Ain-Alap unit continue communicated with the victim family and file a case to the district court for bail but unfortunately the lower court refused the bail and sent the victim to jail. Later Ain-Alap unit, with the support from Ms. Sahenaz Sultana Shuma, District Level Lawyers Group (DLLG) member, the case further sent to the Supreme Court and finally 6 month bail granted to the victim. (Soft version of Spotlight is uploaded in Bandhu website)

**Spotlight 3**

Meghna Khatun Hijra from Sirajganj was married to Mr. Sujon on 23.11.16. During this time Meghna paid the debt of Sujon approximately BDT 350,000 in several installments. Once all the debt was paid to the creditor, Sujon started to misbehave with Meghna and asking for money now and then. Sujon continued this physical and mental torture on Meghna so that she leaves him. Meghna went to the local elected members for an amicable solution and also filed a complaint to the police station. No visible progress was noticed, therefore with the assistance of Watchdog Member from Sirajganj, Meghna got in touch with Ain-Alap. Later, with the direct supervision of Ain-Alap team, this dispute was compromised with mutual understanding between the parties and as a latest update both of them are living their conjugal life happily.
GENDER AND SEXUALITY RESOURCE CENTRE

Under Gender and Sexuality Resource Center (GSRC), Bandhu regularly organized learning circle sessions and documentary and other programs but due to unstable country situation, the resource centre limited its activities for the time being. However, during the reporting period July to December 2016, a total of 186 students of Public and Private University students (i.e., University of Dhaka, University of Liberal Arts of Bangladesh, Stamford University and American International University of Bangladesh) visited the Bandhu Resource Center. They browsed different books, articles and videos collection on Hijra/TG to prepare their specific assignment as a part of their course. Right now the Resource Centre has almost 1,144 resources including books, journals, audio video documents, etc.
Section

5

UNPLANNED ACHIEVEMENTS
UNPLANNED ACHIEVEMENTS

MSA TEAM MEMBERS IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE/SHORT COURSES

PARTICIPATION IN AIDS CONFERENCE, DERWIN, SOUTH AFRICA

Masbah U Ahmed Biraj, Asst. Manager, MSA Project attended the AIDS Conference, Derwin, South Africa and presented poster presentation on “Strategies for Improving Services and Programs to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against MSM and Transgender People in Dhaka”. Based on a qualitative study, the abstract denotes that 90% of MSM and TG community members in Dhaka face a variety of physical, sexual and verbal abuses ranging from being teased by people on the streets to rape and murder.

PARTICIPATION IN A SHORT COURSE ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS AND THE LAW

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) organized a short course on “Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the Law” from 20-24 August, 2016 at BRAC Center where Mohammad Zahid Hossain, Consultant of Ain-Alap participated on behalf of Bandhu. The major objective of this course was to increase the knowledge level among the participants on sexual and reproductive health and rights and analysis the laws. The key areas of the course was international human rights laws, major treaties on child and women issues, constitution, national laws related to marriage, abortion, nari O shishu nirjaton domon ain, penal code, health policies, digital security, experience sharing etc.
MEETING WITH NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

On 8th September 2016, a team of Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) visited National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Bangladesh to greet Kazi Reazul Hoque, Chairman, NHRC, Md. Nazrul Islam & Begum Nurunnahar Usmani, full time member of NHRC. During this meeting, Shale Ahmed, Executive Director of Bandhu expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude to the Commission for working so closely in previous years and hoping to continue this relationship with the dynamic leadership of new chief and commissioners in future. Mr. Ahmed mentioned that recently, Bandhu has submitted a study report titled ‘understanding the identity of Hijra: policy implication which was supported by NHRC and keen to translate this important report into Bangla and disseminate among the key stakeholders. In response, the chief mentioned that this is indeed a good idea and can be placed the issue to the commission meeting for endorsement.

Once it has been endorsed, the committee members can sit together and can take initiatives to translate and disseminate after being duly revision. Mr. Kazi Reazul Hoque, Chairman of NHRC mentioned that there is a possibility of expanding the UNDP fund for the commission. However, in terms of disbursing the challenge fund, Bandhu is a very strong competitor. There will be formal due process in selecting the eligible organizations and it will be notified accordingly. The discussion also includes the draft Anti-Discrimination law and its present status. It is recommended to have a close look into the definition of Hijra in the draft law and also explore the current status of the daft so that further strategies can be outlined in order to advance the process. This interactive discussion concluded with a clear commitment from both end to work more closely in coming days towards upholding the human rights of the third gender who are the most marginalized community in the society.
CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON LEADERSHIP BY APCOM

As a part of APCOM initiatives, Md. Masbah U Ahmed Biraj has attended the workshop on “Developing Effective Leaders Resulting to Good Governance” as enthusiasm participant from Bandhu from 22 to 24 August’ 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. The aim of the workshop were to:

- Orient the identified community leaders on self-understanding to be better prepared for their leadership developmental journey;
- Make the identified community leaders better comprehend the power of influence in the functioning of leadership;
- Orient the identified community leaders on traits and behaviors associated with leadership, and
- Equip participating community members with knowledge and skills on leadership styles and good

As a part of follow up process, Bandhu already decided to arrange same training for CBOs in Bangladesh as some of CBO participants were unable to attend the workshop due to visa issue. However, the proposal for training is already been shared with UNDP for additional approval.
RECEIVED ‘JOYEETA AWARD’ AS THIRD GENDER

Arifa Yeasmin Moyori, a role model and great leader of Hijra community received JOYEETA Award by the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs for her contribution in the society. This prestigious award by the Government has paved the way for her movement and bring honor for all the Hijra community members in Bangladesh. She has proved that if the transgender people are given opportunity, they can play an important role for their family, society and also to the nation.

She is the president of Shiri Somaj Kollan Songho, which is located in Jamalpur district and one of the progressive CBO maintained and guided by the Bandhu Social Welfare Society. As a result of her strong determination and dedication, she is now become very famous and successful in her territory. Recently she has also managed to make her passport with mentioning her Gender ‘X’ in the gender box which is a remarkable achievement for this community.
SR COORDINATION MEETING IN BANGKOK

On 22 to 23 September 2016, the Multi-Country South Asia Global Fund HIV (MSA) Programme organized Coordination Meeting (SRCM) for its all Sub-Recipients at Hotel Dusit Thani, Bangkok, Thailand. Nearly 80 participants attended the two-day meeting, consisting of representatives from each programme sub-recipient, the Global Fund, UNDP, UNAIDS and Save the Children-Nepal. From Bangladesh, a total of 4 participants attended the meeting. In the meeting Mr. Shale Ahmed, Executive Director, Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) participated a panel discussion as a panelists on Human Rights and Advocacy. The major objective of this discussion was to share the recent progress on human rights and advocacy, what can be done up to end of 2016, and what needs to continue in 2017.

On behalf of MSA project-Bangladesh, Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Programme Manager, presented a power point presentation on ‘Achievement of Bangladesh’. In her presentation she highlighted some significant results those were achieved under the leadership of UNDP and UNDP.
PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING ON WORKPLACE WELLBEING MANAGEMENT (WWM) AT KATHMANDU, NEPAL

Md. Muzib Ullah - Sr. Officer (Training) participated in training on Workplace Wellbeing Management (WWM) at Kathmandu, Nepal from 24 October to 2 November 2016 organized by UCEP Bangladesh. Bandhu Social Welfare Society received an invitation from UCEP Bangladesh as MI country expert organization to uplift the socio-economic conditions of underprivileged children and youth with the power of education and skills development. The training was conducted by 4 international trainers from Rutgers and GGD, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

This is a pilot training under UCEP Bangladesh Technical School. The course is a composition of 4 blocks where Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an integral part of the curriculum.

It engages a pull of Master Trainers (MTs) from different organizations in its pilot. Bandhu is playing a vital role to conduct session about Gender and Motivational Interviewing (MI).
PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS AT COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Consultant (Ain-Alap), Mohammad Zahid Hossain participated in regional workshop on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Sex characteristics at Colombo, Sri Lanka from 12 December to 15 December 2016 organized by Asia Pacific Region (APF). The workshop aimed in promoting and protecting human rights in relation to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Sex Characteristics and also bringing together National Human Rights Commission and Civil Society together to work towards the issues around Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Sex Characteristics.

The syllabus / outline of the course was based on selected chapters from the APF-UNDP training manual, promoting and protecting human rights in relation to sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics, and other materials relating to SOGISC issues. All the reading material during the online course provided in English. The learning methodology used varied throughout the 4 weeks (and included joint discussion forums, case studies, and individual email feedback from the trainer).

Upon completion of the online component, participants were invited for a face to face discussion to further consolidate the online learning.
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I SURVIVED, because the HOPE inside me...!