EDITORIAL

To reflect the real culture of the society, there is no alternative of literacy and art. The literacy is a technique to attract hungry reader to participate in social change, diminish the bad norms and accept the reality. SPANDON followed by the community literacy that bring from grassroot level to international resources to make values stronger and support to create an enable environment for the gender diverse community in Bangladeshi society.

SPANDON is not only the contribution of the gender diverse community but also supporting the Government of Bangladesh and international community to get an idea related to narrative that achieved development of Bandhu in every quarter.

Through the edition of SPANDON (July - September’ 2019) Bandhu covered numbers of life skills narratives in relation to survival, health, education, festival, art, culture in national, regional and international arena.

The board of editors hoping this edition will be supportive for our dearest readers to express their emotions in a motivating way.
KEY figures of Bandhu

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Received Services

20118 Project Participants

Participated in Group Education Session (GES)

2664 Project Participants

Received HIV testing and Counseling (HTC) services and knows their results

2978 Project Participants

STIs diagnosed, treated and counseled at field office/ DIC/ SUDDIC/ Outlet level

1905 Episodes

Counseling Session (One to one/ group/ via phone)

380 Clients

ADVOCACY PROGRAM

We advocated

495 Stakeholders

127 Youth participants

225 Educationalists, Law Enforcement Agencies, AIDS/ STD Program, Media Channels, Different divisional/district administration, Department of Social Services, DCs, Women Affair, Civil Surgeon office, INGOs officials, public and private educational institutions, Community Based Organization (CBO) members and other influentia’s of the society.

11 Health Professionals

99 Legal Aid Providers

33 Media Journalists

CAPACITY BUILDING

We trained

342 people

215 Relevant Stakeholders

127 Community Members, youth participants, DC staffs

LEGAL SUPPORT (AIN ALAP)

145 Calls Received and Provide legal Information, counseling and support

24 Cases Documented on Human Rights violation

4 Community Based Organization’s implementing small scale business for their sustainability.

17 materials newly enlisted and 42 persons visited Gender and Sexuality Resource Centre

SPONDON

3

TOGETHER FOR LEGAL SUPPORT TO HIJRA COMMUNITY

Increase knowledge and capacity of the paralegals on selected legal issues and access legal services, Bandhu Social Welfare Society by the support of USAID organized 2 Training titled “Paralegal Training” on 24-25 July 2019 at Barishal and 27-28 August 2019 at Khulna. Md. Tanvir Islam, Assistant Manager-Legal Support & Security facilitated the training. Total of 39 participants of Watchdog committee and CBO and DIC Staffs from Barishal & Khulna division participated at the Training.

Major contents of this training were around Human Rights, Human Rights Violation, Paralegal issues, Work of Paralegal, Duty of Para legal are discussed, Ain Alap, Bandhu Helpline Service, Case management, GD & FIR.

Some participants recommended that local CBO and beneficiaries should introduce with DLAC office that they can get free legal support. Moreover, Bandhu may create a local platform involving panel Lawyers and Watchdog members for addressing HR violation issues Link up with different govt/Non govt organizations.

Role playing, experience sharing, group work and setting factual examples made the day long training session lively and enjoyable. Participants gathered huge conceptual knowledge and committed to use this learning for their betterment.

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Spondon
ALTERNATIVE GENDER IDENTITIES AND RELIGION

Bandhu Social Welfare Society organized a two-day long workshop with influential religious leaders of Bangladesh during 16th & 17th September 2019 where 22 participants attended including TG women, Buddhist Monk, Hindu Priest, Christian Pastor and Islamic scholars. The Independent Consultant, Imam Muhsin Hendricks from South Africa facilitated the whole training. The objectives of the workshop were to gather knowledge about alternative gender identities and analyze their current attitudes towards third gender community. The workshop also aimed to produce some recommendations and develop time bound actions for further advocacy.

The facilitator was commended for his chosen workshop methodology, ability to maintain equal respect for religions and aesthetic presentation. Most religious leaders admitted that they had very little knowledge of the gender diverse community prior to the workshop thus improved during two days’ workshop. There was an appreciation also for the organizers in having brought together a different religious leader including TG community in one room.

The Imams and Khatibs committed that they will continue regular discuss on Hijra issue during the ‘Jummah Prayer’ where the other religious leaders will take initiative to organize a talk show on Hijra issues in electronic Media during Ramadan month. Some of the religious leaders invited Bandhu to conduct orientation sessions on TG community with their students in Madrasah.

লৈঞ্জিক পরিচয় এবং ধর্ম

“বেঁধে সোশাল ওয়েলফেরে সোসাইটি” বাংলাদেশের প্রভাবশালী ধর্মীয় নেতাদের নিয়ে ২০১৯ সালের ১৬ এবং ১৭ সেপ্টেম্বর দুই দিন বাংলা কর্মশালার আয়োজন করে।

কর্মশালায় ২২ জন অংশগ্রহণকারী যোগদান করে যাদের মধ্যে ছিলেন ট্রাঙ্কসিমন্টেন, বোদ্ধবিবাহ, হিন্দু গুরোকান্ত, হিউমান ব্লক এবং ইসলামিক পর্ষাগণ। সাউথ আফ্রিকার ইমাম মুহসিন হেন্ড্রিক্স কর্মশালায় ধর্মাবলম্বী ধর্ম ও সমন্বিত হিসেবে উপস্থিত ছিলেন। কর্মশালায় উদ্বে ছিলো তৃতীয় নিপুণ সম্প্রদায়ের লৈঞ্জিক পরিচয় সড়কে জানা এবং অন্যান্য নভারকারীদের ব্যাপক অভিজ্ঞতা বিস্তার করা।

কর্মশালা থেকে কিছু সুপরিচিত ধর্ম এবং তার বাসবাসের সময়সীমা নির্ধারণ করা হয়।

কর্মশালায় সম্মেলনের বিভিন্ন নির্মম্মহ্য সকল ধর্মের প্রতি সমভাবনা শ্রুতি প্রদর্শন এবং নাদরিক উপস্থাপনার সম্পর্কে প্রশ্ন করা হয়। বেশিরভাগ ধর্মীয় নেতাই মনে করেন, এই কর্মশালায় অংশগ্রহণ করার আগ পর্যন্ত তারা লৈঞ্জিক বৈদ্যুতিক সম্পর্কে খুব অস্পষ্ট জানতেন। কর্মশালা থেকে তারা অনেক কিছু জেনেছেন। কর্মশালায় উপস্থিত সবাই সংগঠকের প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতা প্রকাশ করেন, ট্রাঙ্কসিমন্টেনসহ বিভিন্ন ধর্মবাদীদের একত্রিত করা জন্য।

ইমাম এবং ধর্মীয় নেতাগণ প্রতিজ্ঞা করেন, তারা জুমুয়ার ধর্মায়তা তৃতীয় বিষয়ে নিয়মিত কথা বলবেন; অন্যদিকে ধর্মীয় নেতাগণ ইলেকট্রনিক বিজ্ঞান বিভিন্ন টক-শোতে এ বিষয়ে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি করবেন। কিছু ধর্মীয়নেতা বিভিন্ন মাধ্যমায় ও ধর্মীয় শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি করবিনো অনুষ্ঠান আয়োজনের পরামর্শ দেন।
**A DAY WITH SCHOOL CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

Make a bridge between the Gender Diverse Population and school children in order to sensitize them concerning the gender diversity issues of Bangladesh, Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) organized a sensitization session with the school students and teachers at Siddik Memorial School & College, Dhaka on 19 September, 2019. Abu Shohol Shawn, Director, Siddik Memorial School and College, concluded the event with strong hope towards gender diverse community for their greater success in near future. He said that, parents should be more sensitized on issues regarding to gender sensitivity. He invited Bandhu to arrange training for teachers on gender diverse population and their rights. Also, he committed that Siddik Memorial School and College will organize a student-parent discussion session on third gender issue.
A total of 105 participants representing students, Director of the school, Principle of Siddik Memorial, Teachers, members of school management committee, Director- Policy Advocacy and Human Rights of Bandhu, Community representative and staffs of RGDP, Bandhu graced the sensitization event. Md. Asaduzzaman Murad, Principle of Siddik Memorial School and College welcomed to the distinguished guests and participants through his opening remarks. He expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude to Bandhu for this dignified initiative.

Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Director- Policy Advocacy and Human Rights, Bandhu Social Welfare Society shared the overall scenario of gender diverse population in Bangladesh as well as a brief orientation on gender and sex. Faridul Islam Jonak, Junior Officer- Liaison, Bandhu Social Welfare Society shared her experience, story and achievements towards community person. Also, she shared their challenges and experiences related to accessing Health, Education and Employment.

POSTER PRESENTATION IN MINT FORUM: "HISTORY OF MI IN BANGLADESH"

In 2014 “Exploring new ways of improving sexual health and well-being of young males in Bangladesh and Kenya through a Motivational Intervention (MI) approach” has introduced MI approach under Bandhu Social Welfare Society. The Dutch Government, a consortium consisting of the MSM community-based organization Bandhu Social Welfare Society in Bangladesh, AMREF Kenya, the GGD Municipal Health Services in Amsterdam and the Royal Tropical Institute (consortium lead partner) and MINT forum.

In 2017, with close mentorship of Netherlands team master trainer Mohammad Rofiqul Islam Royal received TNT and awarded the MINT Forum Membership as first ever Bangladeshi.

During the forum of Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT) 24-28 September’ 2019 Tallinn, Estonia trainers from the Netherlands, had the honor to present a poster on "The history of Motivational Interviewing in Bangladesh". The author of the poster Mohammad Rofiqul Islam Royal who is a MINT member since 2017.
Besides workshops and presentations on Motivational Interviewing (MI) there were the opportunity to present posters about studies and other subjects concerning MI. The forum was visited by 250 participants (MI trainers) from all over the world to exchange their skills in training MI. Royal’s poster showed the efforts and results that were made to implement MI in Bangladesh. Many people showed an interest in the poster and some asked questions about it. Some even took pictures and hopefully they contact Royal and ask questions, or share remarks or ideas.

Despite the fact that Royal was not able to be there, we were very proud and excited to show his work on this international event, this way Bangladesh was present on this forum in Estonia, Europe.

Next year the forum will be in Toronto, Canada.

**GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH: TRAINING ON ADVANCED SRHR**

Bandhu management has taken capacity building initiatives for its staffs towards increase their knowledge and development skills through different trainings under a collaborative initiative with MDF. Bandhu believes that capacity building initiatives for different level staffs open the windows for fresh thinking, new ideas generation and willingness for the organizational and personal growth.

Upur ekti poster proshaner suroag pano. Aar sei posterbari mun prokete chilibo rupikuri isakam roiler bidhi 2017 saal theke emahaiemoti (MINT)’er ekjon sadho.

Mottobeshonalo Eastajuddhiyur upor karshoala o urupedaropanar paapashati emahai (MI) eer saatey rupikuri parbikshan o abonno bishya niyo poster urupedan karha ha ei feram. Emahai proshokher darokta bishya karate fotoramito bishesh rupikuri prastu theke agat 250 jon amshoarnakariro poster proshan karol. Bangladesh emahai batakaraner dhote o emo folaral royoler posterer hotoy. Anokhaie posterbari byuparer abar prosho karol.

Royoler posterbari anusthitiik, ei feram o urupedan karo barjotro prati kortajatra prosho karol. Eastajurer emotobijia anusthiti ei feram Bangladeshsar urupedan baru dushito goper horehena.

Aagam barh feroramit kanader torkoate anusthita hobe.
As Bandhu is working for positive change of the lives of the gender diverse community through SRHR activities, capacity building and policy advocacy, the SRHR training MDF proposes, will help the organization to get an in-depth look at important issues and current debates in sexual reproductive health policy, sexuality, diversity. It will focus inclusive and rights-based approaches to sexual and reproductive health.

On 7-9 September, the training titled 'Advanced SRHR-based on a Gender Transformative Approach' was conducted. This training was facilitated by Rachel Ploem, Expert in Gender, SRHR and Prevention of Sexual Violence.

This three-days training was more focused on conducting various group exercises so that the participants can have an in depth understanding of the topics and issues related to SRHR.

Exercises like, power walk, gender box, gender bread person, stairs of tolerance, fatherhood legacy, world café etc. were done. Participants learnt and realize a lot from these exercises. Through these group works participants have also learnt about different approaches of SRHR. Gender & Power were looked at from a Rights Based Approach, as concepts and in exercises to get an in-depth understanding of how power and gender are intrinsically interconnected and how they interfere with SRHR of women, men, young people, of various gender and sexual diversities.
Phlippines President Appoints Transgender Woman to Government

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has appointed a transgender woman to his government.

Dindi Tan, a long-time community activist in the Philippines, is director of the country's Department of Agrarian Reform. Tan had previously been the department's assistant program manager. Tan on Wednesday told the Washington Blade she is the first trans woman named to a position within the Philippine government.

"This is very big for our community here in the Philippines," said Tan. "It sends a powerful message that the Gender Diverse community is part of the government agenda and that the present administration remains committed to furthering equal rights for everyone." "By appointing community leaders to positions of power in the bureaucracy, we will be able to incorporate our voices into the mainframe of the governmental processes," added Tan.
JAPANESE TRANS PEOPLE GOT LEGAL RIGHTS TO USE BATHROOM

The Tokyo judge presiding over the case found one government employee’s treatment by her employer, including asking her to ‘go back to being a man’, to be ‘lacking in validity’.

A transgender woman employed by the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry in Japan has successfully sued her employer for denying her the right to use the bathroom that aligns with her gender identity.

A Tokyo district court awarded ¥1.32 million in damages to the woman for being forced to use a bathroom other than the women's bathroom on her office's floor, which District Judge Kenji Ebara says is illegal because it “constrains people’s benefits of living their lives in accordance with their self-identified genders.” The ruling also requires the ministry, and all employers, allow Trans people to use the bathroom of her choice, without notifying anyone else of her transgender identity.

Ebara also made it illegal in his ruling for employees to require surgery from their
employees to recognize their gender. This was in response to the fact that the Ministry official in charge of personnel told the woman that she should "go back" to being a man if they're not going to have reassignment surgery. Ebara made it known that he found it "unacceptable" and "extremely lacking in validity", and that it was also an "abuse of discretion" to have the employee identify herself when using the bathroom with others inside.

"The ruling will encourage other people having the same concern. Employers should respect human rights," the woman is reported as saying at a press conference following the ruling. The Ministry will "review the case" before deciding to file any appeals.

THE BEGINNING OF THE SUCCESS

Shohagi, Live in an unhealthy and slum area of Gendaria, Dhaka. Light and air cannot enter her living place, the love of human affection is far away. This is how the life of the deprived Hijra community likes them. The door to our education was never open so she could not write her name, had to work through thumb sign.
She has no idea on sexual diseases and her rights. She said, "We did not have the opportunity to develop life by taking such kind of education like other students without discrimination and slander in schools." As a result, they end up not getting it in their lives - "I thought that this way I would be deprived of the light of education and imitate my life.

But the achievement of her education through RGDP project of Bandhu is leading to fulfillment. She has now learned to write her name, learn to count money and also count numbers, she learned how to protect herself from Sexual Diseases and She know her human rights.

"I want to take this opportunity to be an enlightened human being." - Shohagi.

In this way to address the basic literacy and SRHR issues, Bandhu is working in Dhaka and Mymensingh districts with an objective to provide functional literacy and continuing education of adults and youths Hijra's who are illiterate or semi-literate for enhancing the ability and desire to take responsibility for their own life, as well as taking an active and engaged part in society. Bandhu set upped 2 Non-Formal Education Centers at different CBOs where the facilitators are providing their support for their learning.

BANDHU'S STEPS TO PREVENT NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

During 1980s, Bangladesh was more prone to communicable diseases, but nowadays, this trend is changing due to emerging frequency of non-communicable diseases. Non-communicable diseases are occurring due to ignorance, sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy food consumption and substances abuses. Bandhu is working with the government on preventing and control of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS since 2008 through its drop-in centers for the wellbeing of gender diverse population. As the disease patterns are changing and the gender diverse community is more prone to develop diseases because of their ignorance on food habits, lifestyle and free access to health care facilities. By focusing on the health policy of Bangladesh, sustainable development goal and considering vulnerability of gender diverse population, Bandhu initiates the
Non-Communicable Diseases Program. Under this program activity, we identified Obesity, Hypertension and Diabetes at our six Drops in centers that are located at Dhaka and adjacent Dhaka. From October 2018 to September 2019, we screened a total of 1371 clients among them 356 was overweight, 22 was obese, and 201 was hypertensive. We screened random blood sugar level of 1181 clients among them 175 was suspectable diabetic (raised sugar level) as a primary diagnosis. After completing this primary diagnosis, we counseled the clients and referred them to government Hospitals to take further treatments by facing a consultant. As early diagnosis are the first steps to control non-communicable diseases for reducing the risk factors including tobacco use, physical inactivity, and unhealthy diets. Bandhu is always committed to caring for gender diverse population. In upcoming days, Bandhu hopefully will expand the program on Non-communicable diseases.
Regional women's NGO ARROW's three day festival took place on September 11-13 and it was to create critical space for young activists from South East Asian and South Asian countries to understand how young people's issues cut across the 17 SDGs and their 169 targets, and prepare them with skills, knowledge and capacities to review and realise the SDGs.

Young people from 14 countries including Malaysia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Myanmar and Sri Lanka had gathered for the festival. They also reviewed how countries in the region are progressing towards the realization of these goals.

Trainings, workshops, group discussions and leadership trainings are part of the Asia Regional Youth Festival. It also provided creative spaces so young people can express their ideas on SRHR through a wide range of art genres including art exhibition, film, literature, and poetry.

From RHRN Bangladesh platform National Coordinator Saraban Tahura Zaman, Co Focal Najia
Nuray Jarin, Bandhu Volunteer Utthan Roy and Co focal of SERAC Bangladesh Nusrat Sharmin Reshma attended the Asian Regional Forum Youth Festival and represent Bangladesh there. In the festival they organized a miniscule Art therapy for the guests and participants. This activity managed to create an open space for the young people to reflect their mind in the canvas.

The whole workshop and festival helped the participants to learn, create new friendship and exchange knowledge.

**Story Telling**

You can see my happiness with my wife. And this situation is not created by one day. I have to struggle a lot. I must face numbers of high-level stigma and discrimination from whole society. In the beginning once I identified HIV positive, I have ignored by my relatives, rejected from social program and participation. I was got puzzle to deal my life initially, always living with idea to commit suicide. I was out of support network that essential for my living. There is no information for HIV positives for living my positive life. I found Bandhu and took proper counseling, slowly engage with SPARSHA. Got training called “Treatment as Literacy”. I am one of the regular PLHA members who taking part of Social Day. Through the “Social Day” I learn how to leave the positive life. Very important to
tell you that my life day by day getting smooth, easier and happier through receiving training under Bandhu Training department. After received training on “Training and Literacy” I focused on ART adherence, personal hygiene, infection prevention, HIV disclosure to partner and its management. I got idea through the training how to negotiate once face stigma and discrimination. I have learned how a HIV person control HIV and sustain immune power through living positive life. The Bandhu's master trainers is so supportive, training systems are very much confidential that we believe Bandhu is the best organization for protecting HIV for the particular community and contributing Bangladesh in HIV responses. My wife also HIV positive, she is so pretty and we excepted each other's. My 16-year young boy also knows about us HIV status and excepted us as we are. And these all I am positively facing because lessons and learn that I have received from Bandhu training. One of the Bandhur's master trainer visited our home in December 2019 for ensuring partner management services. And I hope the master trainer get idea how happily dealing our life living with HIV. Now I am living my life as HIV openly person in Chattogram and I am ready to project myself, my family and the others HIV positive gender diverse community in my location.