EDITORIAL

"Once I thought that if a man or woman could work, why couldn't we!" Shima Hijra, who is working with Denim Export Ltd shared her experiences on working with RMG sector. YES, you are right Shima, we all are loudly agreed with you and The Journey of New life has begun.

A new day of gender diverse population 'each & everyone' started a struggle in contextual situation. Make the path more smoothen on combat of gender diverse population, Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) always concentrate cultural sensitivity, respect legal constraints, focus on social values with full consent of the community before take any action. SPANDAN always focus all the changing stories & successes of community that integrated and identical with SDGs that contributing to the development of Bangladesh.

Bandhu has been incorporated the many development tropics in this edition of Spandon, such as Madrasha education, International advocacy, public interest litigation, Human rights, SRHR, student fellowship, various day celebration which are examples of successful improvement of the community to mainstream in aspect of social acceptance. Through this quarter Bandhu able to cross connected with donors, government, community, national & international stockholders. We hope day will come that gender diverse community would enjoy their life as other human community having. We are very grateful to all those are directly or indirectly supported to define SPANDAN in this quarter.

'এক সময় আমারের নাথি-পুর্ণ এক সঙ্গে কাজ করতে পারলে, আমরা গবেষণা না কুলুনো?'- শিমা হিজরা তৈরি গোষ্ঠীতে শিমা কাজের অভিজ্ঞতার কথা বলেন এবং একেই, যিনি এলেট টেস্টিং একাডেমিতের একজন গবেষক। তাঁর সাথে, শিমা। আমারা অপরের সীমার করি আমরা সমর্থন এবং নতুন জীবনের যাত্রা শুরু করছে।

এই সময়ে পরিবর্তনের জন্য হিজরা ও সৈকতিক বৈষণ্যতায় জনগণতার সফলতা সূচনা করে যেখানে। সামাজিক এই পথ সহজ করে খুব লেখালিখে ওয়েলসের গোষ্ঠী- খুব এ জনগণতার মাধ্যমে নিয়ে দেশে বিদ্যমান সাংস্কৃতিক মূল্যবোধ, নিয়ম-নীতি এবং সামাজিক আচার মেনে নতুন নতুন কর্মসূচি গঠন করে যেখানে। ’স্পাংডন’ সর্বমধ্যে হিজরা ও সৈকতিক বৈষণ্যতায় জনগণতার সাংস্কৃতিক ও পরিবর্তনের গতি বলে যে বর্তমান সাধনের উল্লম্ব এবং এসার্টিফায়র সম্পর্কে অস্তিরাপ।

ধর্মীয় শিক্ষার লিঙ্গ পরিবর্তনকারী, সামাজিককর আইনকারী, জনসাধারণ আইনটি মানবাধিকার, প্রতিবেদন সম্পর্কে যোগাযোগ, টুইটার ফেসবুক, লিঙ্গ পরিবর্তনকারী বিদ্যমান উল্লম্ব তথ্যের অনেকগুলো প্রতিষ্ঠান এই সাধনের অংশ করে যেখানে, যা সৈকতিক বৈষণ্যতায় জনগণতার সাংস্কৃতিক এম্পোর্ম্যাটিক নিষেধাজ্ঞায় সংখ্যার। এই সূচনায় সাংস্কৃতিক দাতার, সরকারি, আইনকারী মহানগরীতি, জাতীয় এবং আন্তর্জাতিক অঙ্গীরাপনের বেদুই দেওয়াপড়ে আমার দৃষ্টিকোণ যায়। আমাদের বিদ্যমান সম্পর্কে স্পাংডনের এই সাংস্কৃতিক সাহায্য গৃহীত করবে। যা বিশ্বস্ত ও গোপনভাবে স্পাংডনের এই সাংস্কৃতিক সাহায্য গৃহীত করবে, সাধারণ অনুসন্ধান মূলকতাকে করবে।
**HEALTH CARE SERVICES**

- **19181** Project Participants
- **2361** Project Participants
- **2813** Project Participants
- **1781** Episodes
- **304** Clients

**ADVOCACY PROGRAM**

- We advocated 1096 Stakeholders
- 57 Youth participants
- 25 Health Professionals
- 178 Legal Aid Providers
- 61 Media Journalists

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

- We trained 221 people
- 83 Relevant Stakeholders
- 138 Community Members, youth participants, DIC staffs

**LEGAL SUPPORT (AIN ALAP)**

- Calls Received and Provide legal information, counseling and support: 322
- Cases Documented on Human Rights violations: 42

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

**11** Books newly enlisted and 56 persons visited Gender and Sexuality Resource Centre.
THE JOURNEY TO A NEW LIFE BEGAN

Hijra is a negative perception and severe stigmatization by the society, even they are not often considered eligible for mainstream education and thus respectable employment opportunities for them are beyond imagination. Consideration the above circumstances Bandhu organized a consultation with Hijra gurus from different part of the country held at Bandhu conference room on 03 October 2019 where 22 Hijra Gurus participated across the country.

The purpose of this consultation was to receive advices from Hijra Gurus about the alternative livelihood option for potential Hijras and how to organize Job fair. In the welcome remarks Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Director Policy advocacy and human rights explained why Bandhu organize this consultation with prominent Hijra gurus from across the country.

Shima Hijra, who is working with Denim Export Ltd shared her experiences on working with RMG sector. She said, "Once I thought that if a male or female could work, why couldn’t we?" Moshiur Rahman-Deputy Manager of Bandhu shared a short presentation about good practice in South Asian Countries on Transgender Population in terms of different livelihood option.

Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Director-Policy Advocacy and Human Rights of Bandhu moderated the open discussion with the opinion of Hijra gurus and their view about different livelihood. Mohona Hijra from Rajshahi said that Hijrargiri is an honorable profession for us as its our culture but our new generation of Hijra are coming to this profession in search of better earnings.

During the discussion some recommendations came up from the participants. Firstly, Bandhu should make a linkage with the Hijra gurus to identify possible

নবযাত্রা: কর্মক্ষেত্রে হিজ্ড়া

আমাদের সমাজে হিজ্ড়াদের কুসংস্কার ও নেতিবাচকতাতে মুখ্যতম করা হয়। তাদেরকে সমাজের মুদ্রাধারে শিক্ষাবিদ্যার অন্তর্ভুক্তি করা বিচক্ষণ করা হয় না, এমনকি তাদের সৃষ্টিযোগ করা যায় না। বস্তু সোসাইটি সেলে ফেয়ার সমালোচনা করা হয় ২৩ জানুয়ারি ২০১৯,হিজ্ড়া পুলিশের দ্বারে একটি পরামর্শ সভা আয়োজন করেন, যেখানে সারাদেশে থেকে ২২ জন হিজ্ড়া পুলিশ অংশগ্রহণ করেন।

স্বাধীন অধিকার, কর্মক্ষেত্রে হিজ্ড়া

চেরপান্থি সিমিটেডে চাপুরিকালী লীলা হিজ্ড়া, তৈরী গৃহস্থ শিশু তার বাড়ির অভিজ্ঞতা বলে, কর্মক্ষেত্রে হিজ্ড়া বলে তকে কমলা আমাদের ভাব হয়নি। রাণাঘাট থেকে আগামো হিজ্ড়া হিজ্ড়িগরিকে সমাজবাধারণ প্রশা উভয়ের করে বলেন, এটি আমাদের সংস্কৃতি কিছু পর্যাপ্ত থাক যার এই সংস্কৃতিতে আসে, তারা আরে ভালো কোনো আমার উল্লেখ ত্যাতে।

উভয় অধিকারে সমাজ অংশগ্রহণকারীদের থেকে কিছু প্রশ্ন উঠে আসে। পেশাদার, বস্তু উৎপাদন হিজ্ড়া প্রশ্নের সাথে সম্পর্ক তৈরি করে তাদের মধ্য থেকে প্রশাসনিক প্রাথমিক এবং তাদের মধ্যে সমাজে সৃষ্টিযোগ করা করা। দেশের প্রতিটি সিদ্ধান্ত চাপুরি-মেলা আয়োজন করা। বস্তু চার্চারাউন্ড মুখ্য লেগাল ইসলাম
opportunities and candidates. In addition, Bandhu should organize job fairs at divisional level. Anisul Islam Hero, Chairperson of Bandhu shared an opportunity about a fashion store at Shimanto Square.

Shale Ahmed, Executive Director of Bandhu Social Welfare Society said that we need your cooperation to show the world that the Hijra community of Bangladesh is also progressing day by day. Already we’re getting offers from ‘We Serve’ and ‘Zurhem Ltd’.

Sumana Binte Masud representative of USAID said that now it’s time to raise your voice to ensure your rights to the government and other stakeholders and on behalf of you Bandhu has taken this initiative as a leading role.

A DAY WITH MADRASHA CHILDREN

To make a bridge between the Gender Diverse Population and Madrasha children in order to sensitize them concerning the gender diversity issues of Bangladesh, Bandhu organized a sensitization session at Madrasha-E Mohammadia Arabia Fazil Madrasha, Dhaka on 24 October 2019. A total of 143 participants representing students, Principle of Madrasha-E Mohammadia, Teachers, members of school management committee, Community representative staffs of RGDP, Bandhu, USAID representatives graced the sensitization event. A.N.M Minuddin Sirazy, Principle of the Madrasha welcomed to the distinguished guests and participants through his opening remarks.

Randall Olson, Director, DRG, USAID thanked to Bandhu and the Madrasah management for arranging such meaningful event. He stated that "the reason Bandhu is coming here to share the information of "diversity is beauty. This should be known to everyone."

Facilitators from Bandhu gave participants some color papers to draw their concept about the people surrounding the participants. Participants draw and shared

ধর্মীয় শিক্ষালয়ে একদিন

বাংলাদেশের লিঙ্গ-বৈষম্য পরিবর্তনের কথা বিবেচনা করে মডার্সার শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে তৃতীয় শিপার আন্তর্জাতিক সপ্তাহ ফার্সেন্টা দ্বারা ২৪শে অক্টোবর ২০১৯ মডার্সার-ই মহামদিয়া আনিয়া মডার্সায় বন্ধু একটি সংঘাততামুক্ত সমাবেশ আয়োজন করে। উক্ত সাব্য মডার্সার শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষক, শিক্ষকমণ্ডলী, খুলে মাদ্রাসার কমিটি, RGDP’র প্রতিনিধি, বন্ধু ও USAID’র প্রতিনিধিত্বে মোট ১৭৩ জন অংশগ্রহণ করেন।

মডার্সার গ্রিসিপাল আহ্নামাইন সিরাজী নির্দেশের ব্যাপারে উপস্থিত সকল অংশগ্রহকারীরকে আত্মরক্ষক দায়বাদ জানান।

USAID’র DRG বিভাগের পরিচালক রাস্তা আকাশ ওলিয়া, মডার্সার কর্মকর্তা ও বন্ধুর অংশী অংশগ্রহিতা নিয়ে এই আয়োজনের জন্য ধর্মীয় দায়বাদ। বন্ধু এবং DRG এর মধ্যে এ সকল সাধারণের জন্য বহু উপলব্ধিতে একটি পায়ে এবং এটি সাপ্লার জানা উচিত।

বন্ধুর আয়োজকরা অংশীদারকর্মীদের হিজাব সম্পর্কে ধারণা যাচাই করেন। দেখা যায় উপস্থিত অধিকাংশই হিজাব পায়ে নারীর প্রতিকৃতিকে
their experience that "When I went to draw a Hijra, honestly I couldn't really draw different from women. Then I realized that the Hijras are not outside the society.

Shammi Hijra, Junior Officer- Liaison, Bandhu shared her challenges and experiences related to accessing Health, Education and Employment. She said, "despite significant progress, particularly in the legal recognition of third gender in November 2013, there is still a long way to go until the right of transgender students to education on the basis of non-discrimination is universally respected."

CONSULTATION ON PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION

Bandhu has been working since last 23 years with the Gender Diverse populations with approach of rights-based initiative to community strengthening and reducing stigma & discrimination. Although, the Bangladeshi government recognized Hijras as the separate gender in a cabinet meeting on November 11, 2013, no noteworthy steps have been observed in the socialization and ensuring justice of the community.

Bandhu is continuing its Legal Service Unit (Ain Alap) since 2013. During this period, Bandhu experienced a huge number of Human Rights violation complaint by the Gender diverse community.

Bandhu believes that, Public Interest Litigation (PIL) can be a possible way to address these issues regarding Gender Diverse Population of Bangladesh. For that purpose, Bandhu arranged a Consultation meeting on "Ensuring Gender Diverse Population Rights in Bangladesh- Possibility of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) exploring specific issue" with relevant stakeholders.

On 4th December 2019 Bandhu organized a consultation meeting to discuss regarding regional
countries existing Laws and to identify possible issues for filing Public interest Litigation (PIL).

MD Aminul Islam, Director NLASO (Senior District Judge) along with Deputy director and Assistant directors from NLASO, Representatives from different law firm, Legal service provider organization, Court officer from Labor support cell, Advocates, Community Representatives and Bandhu representatives were present at the consultation meeting.

Md Fosiul Ahsan, Director- Health and Strategic Partnership Bandhu Social Welfare Society Inaugurate the consultation meeting with a welcome speech.

Md Tanvir Islam, Assistant Manager- Legal Support and Security gave a Presentation on Human Rights Situation of Gender Diverse Population and Necessity of Public Interest Litigation in Bangladesh.

Mr. Raja Farid, Justice watch foundation presented the issues around Regional countries Laws regarding Gender Diverse population and comparing Bangladesh.

Md Aminul Islam, Director NLASO said, I can say filing PIL is not an easy process. We are talking about a specific community rights that is not a common topic. “The PIL should be filed by the Community Representatives, if there is no interest from the community what is the interest of others”

Md Shalehuzzaman, Deputy Director, NLASO said, as there are some conflicts among the rights and statutory law regarding this community and there is no settle issue then Higher Judiciary can give specific guideline regarding this issue. The court will decide who the party are.

Masuda Yasmin, Assistant Director, NLASO said, after 2014 recognition there is no specific change happened to the community. The question is who are the community and what is their definition. As we have already a platform that the government recognize the community then there should a specific direction or law for the community as human being.

Saraban Tahura Zaman, National Coordinator, RHRN Bangladesh Platform pointed out, the constitution itself use the pronoun are He/She. So, here the community is excluded as well it can be a major cause of action.

Raja Farid, JWF mentioned, we have representatives from the community and Bandhu as an organization. We will go through a collaborative approach in front of the court. Our plan is to prepare a draft act with recommendation that will be annexure of the case file so that court can have a reference.
ORIENTATION ON LAWYERS FELLOWSHIP

In the continuation phase of USAID’s RGDP project Bandhu initiated Lawyers Fellowship program. The Fellowship offered to the Bandhu Panel Lawyer members who have been working with Bandhu voluntarily for providing legal support towards the Gender Diverse community across the country.

Among these Panel Lawyers, the interested lawyers applied for the Fellowship. A jury board consists of 3 persons with legal expertise and Ain Alap focal of Bandhu selected 10 lawyers for the fellowship by a transparent scoring process based on their qualification and proposal. Those 10 lawyers have joined an orientation program held at Lalmatia Dhaka on Last 7th December 2019.

The program started with registration and formal introduction by Md Moshiur Rahman, Deputy Manager-P&A, Bandhu. After introduction session, he briefed them about the procedures and said this is the 3rd time Bandhu has offered fellowship to their Panel Lawyers.

Later on, Lawyers presented their concept individually. In their presentation, many interesting and important topics came up by which a new era for Gender Diverse population can be achieved where they also will be able to live in this society with equal rights and respect. Md Tanvir Islam and Moshiur Rahman
conducted this presentation and open discussion session. Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Director- Policy Advocacy and Human Rights, joined the program and after a small introduction, she joined the presentation and gave some important feedbacks.

After the presentation and discussion, the Lawyers made their work plan for next 5 months of period. At the end of the program Md Moshiur Rahman thanked the Lawyers and finished with closing remarks.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SRHR TRAINING FOR GDP IN COX’S BAZAR

Training Unit of Bandhu was invited to hold two-day training on "Abuse, Stigma & Discrimination and Human rights related with SRHR of gender diverse people" for members of UNFPA based project staffs in Ukhia, Cox’s bazar. The focus of the Training was to clarify concepts related to abuse, stigma, discrimination and human rights in relation to gender identity and to help participants understand the value of applying these concepts to their work.

Over 20 participatory exercises including debates & discussions, group-work, presentations, role plays as well as screening of documentary films and short videos in two days training. Training held in Wellness Center, Kutupalong, Ukhia on 04-05th December 2019. This training has hopefully equipped participants with information and an understanding of the rights-based and a pleasure-affirming perspective that will make a significant impact in their work.

Mr. Sheuli, shared her life history where she felt left alone and forlorn as her whole surroundings were against her dreams and desire. Leading a life coping with social stigma and discrimination, she is now a self-educated and self-identified transgender woman who can place her voice with strong rationales when it comes to human rights issues and social inclusion of TGs.
ICPD25 NAUROBI SUMMIT 2019: REALIZING THE PROMISES

The year 2019 marked the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo where 179 Governments adopted a landmark Program of Actions (PoA) to strive for achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health for all. The Government of Kenya, Denmark and UNFPA convened together the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 from 12-14 November 2019 attended by approximately 9500 delegates in Nairobi, Kenya. The summit addressed the 5 themes and highlighted the power of Gender Equality, Youth Leadership, Political and Community Leadership, Innovation & Data and Partnership to accelerate the progress.

From Bangladesh, the Government high officials including Honorable Ministers from the Ministries of Health and Planning joined the event along with Parliament Members and Parliament Standing Committee members. The Honorable Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Zahid Maleque delivered time bound declarations on behalf of the State. Besides, the academicians, civil society representatives from RHSTEP, BRAC-Education, BLAST, MJF, Naripokkho, SERAC Bangladesh, Light House also attended the summit.
Mr. Shale Ahmed, Ms. Ummie Farhana Zarif Kanta and Ms. Saraban Tahura Zaman represented Bandhu Social Welfare Society at the global summit. Bandhu currently leading RHRN Platform in Bangladesh where 11 consortium partners are there to address the SRHR of youth adolescents in Bangladesh. In Nairobi Summit, RHRN members played a vital role and shared evidence-based recommendations and youths’ commitment through organizing a national level ICPD25 Youth Consultation in Dhaka and produced a Policy Brief before attending the summit in Nairobi.

In addition, a session titled “Localizing ICPD commitment: Youth and Community” was organized by RHRN platform on 14 November 2019 where youth leaders from Nepal, Kenya, Uganda, Bolivia spoke as panelists. Titir Anan from BLAST moderated the session as a RHRN Platform member. As a part of CSOs commitments, Bandhu along with other civil society organizations developed following 5 takeaway messages for further actions at country level - Reframing the Child Marriage narrative, Re-focusing SRHR narrative, Contextualize the GBV agenda for priority action spaces, Translating Commitments into reality, Exploring New Partnerships.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH NGO BUREAU FOR INCLUSION OF GENDER DIVERSE POPULATION IN FORMS AND FORMATS OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS
Government of Bangladesh gave recognition to this community as Hijra lingo/ third gender in a gazette notification published by Social Welfare Ministry. Since then government of Bangladesh especially Ministry of Social Welfare took many initiatives to work for the betterment of this community. Still third gender community facing challenges in many ways.

To address all these challenges a roundtable discussion on “Inclusion of Gender Diverse Population in forms and formats of Development Sectors (লিঙ্ক বৈচিত্রয়োগ্য জনগোষ্ঠীর মূলধারায় অস্তিত্বীকৃতি ও এনজিও বিষয়ক মূলধারার স্থবিরক্তি গোল টেবিল কেঁপন) was jointly organized by NGO Affairs Bureau and Bandhu Social Welfare Society on December 12, 2019; where Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau, Mr. K M Abdus Salam was present as the chief guest.

Main objective of this roundtable discussion was arranged to create more scopes to work with NGO Affairs Bureau to enhance the scopes for bringing transgender/ Hijra community to mainstream workplaces.

Major achievement of this event was, Director General of NGO Affairs; Mr. K M Abdus Salam said, by 2020 NGO Bureau will make sure 5% quota will be ensured in the development organizations for the Hijra Community people.

Bandhu Social Welfare Society is grateful and showing gratitude to NGO Affairs Bureau for cooperating to held such a successful event and show so much positive support towards the transgender/Hijra community.
NATIONAL LEVEL CONSULTATION WITH THE DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS ON HIJRA COMMUNITY PROGRESS AND CURRENT SITUATION IN BANGLADESH

Micro-Capital Grant of UNDP is currently working at Mymensingham and Sirajgonj in collaboration with Bandhu Social Welfare Society for Hijra and TG livelihood and sustainability purpose. Bandhu also working with National Legal Aid Service Organization since 2015 on human rights of gender minority and develop legal referral mechanism as well.

Bandhu hosted a National Level Consultation with the National Stakeholders on Hijra community progress and current situation in Bangladesh’ on 17th November, 2019. The event highlighted on sharing the study report on recognition of rights of hijra and gender diverse community and review of laws and policies, discussion on possibility to set up hijra welfare board in Bangladesh and to explore possibilities for enabling legal counseling and support provision for hijra population at different government set up.

The event started with the welcome remarks of Shale Ahmed, Executive Director of Bandhu. He welcomes everyone to the event and briefly talked about the works that Bandhu has been doing for the transgenders society including health, human rights and gender rights.

Tasmia Juthi, Research Fellow of BLAST did a presentation on the legal barriers of gender diverse population. Ms. Taslima Yasmin, Asst. Professor, Department of Law, Dhaka University emphasized on the importance of studying more about the national policies of India on Transgenders. She gave example of India’s Tamil Nadu province where they started a transgender welfare fund and after that some other provinces followed it.

UNDP’s Micro Capital Grant ৰ এর সহযোগিতায় বদ্ধ নিরামল ও মন্মধ্যে সারাই বিহীন বিহীনের জীবনোত্তরণ ও জীবনকের জন্য কাজ করে যাচ্ছে। লিখলে মানবিক জননৈতিক আইনের সহযোগিতা প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে বিহীন্য আইন সংস্থার সঙ্গে ২০১৫ সাল থেকে কাজ করছে।

১৭ নভেম্বর ২০১৯, বদ্ধ বিহীনের সামাজিক অধিকার ও বর্তমান বর্তমান জননৈতিক জননৈতিক সম্পর্কে সহযোগিতার সাথে জাতীয় পরামর্শাগার আয়োজন করে। বিহীনের বীর্যক, আইন ও নীতিমালা পর্যালোচনা, তাদের বিভিন্নতার সমন্বয় এবং তাদের আবাসস্থলের সমাপন আলোচনা করা হয়।

বন্ধের দিবসী পরিচালক সাহেবের আমের বিহীনের ধারা, মানবিক ও নীতি অধিকারের ক্ষেত্রে তাদের অবদানের ক্ষেত্রে তারা তুলে ধরেন। BLASTের প্রধান সাহায্য জননৈতিক আইনে যুবী সিস্টেমের সমস্যাগুলো উল্লেখ করেন।

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আইন অধ্যাপক আলিবিশু ইয়াসিনী, ভারতের বিহীনের জাতীয় নীতি সম্পর্কে জানার যাত্রায় তাদের কাজ করেন। তিনি তাকদাদাতা অবদানের উদাহরণ তুলে ধরেন যা ভারতের অগ্রগতি অথবা অর্থনীতিতে অগ্রগতি করছে।

জাতিসংঘ উদ্ধার কর্মজীবন (UNDP)’র মানবিক জননৈতিক নিয়মক কর্মস্তল শক্ত পল্লী, সংহালু জননৈতিক
Shankor Paul, Communities and Minorities Expert, Human Rights Programme, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) talked about the formation and gaps of Anti-Discrimination law and what UNDP is doing on third gender community.

Mr. Anisul Islam Hero, Chairperson of Bandhu opined that not only recognition and legal rights but we all should keep one thing in mind that this group of people are vulnerable in every sphere of life.

After that, an open discussion session was led by Shale Ahmed. Many questions and suggestions came from the open discussion.

Special guest Umme Kulsum, District Judge, Joint Secretary, Law Ministry believe that, stigmatization and discrimination should be resolved. Poverty is one of the reasons why this population are behaving in a certain way. Another important thing is documentation. The birth certificate change should be an option to change the sex of a person.

Mir Ruhul Amin, Secretary, Law Commission another special guest of the event in his speech said that, social and religious misconception around this community should be eliminated.

Chief Guest of the event Md. Aminul Islam, Director, National Legal Aid and Services Organization in his speech said that new law should be enacted to ensure the rights of Hijra population. He also said that many people are still confused about this population so it will be very helpful if proper information is disseminated among people.

The event ended with the vote of thanks of Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Director, Bandhu Social Welfare Society.

CONSULTATION WITH HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM, BANGLADESH (HRFB)

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB) is a national platform of 19 non-governmental organizations working to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh. Bandhu is one of its forum members. On 26 November, 2019 a consultation meeting with HRFB been organized.

Various organizations participated in this meeting and shared their views and experiences. The discussion was started by the Sheeps Hafiza, Executive Director, Ain O Shalish Kendra. At first, she suggested to build a strong bonding with the Human Rights Forum. She said, "There is no law in Bangladesh by which Hijras can seek legal remedy in case of rape or sexual violence against them, so we should raise our voice to make laws for the wellbeing of Hijras".

Rowshon Ara, Project Director, Nari Pokkho said, "Bandhu should prepare a map about which institutions are offering jobs for the Hijra populations".

Nadira Parvin from Nagorik Udhyog recommended Bandhu to monitor the national budget to identify the
allocated budget for this population. Further she proposed to set a proper definition of this hijra. She said an isolated job place is not acceptable, rather hijras should get such a workspace where all gender may work together so that a trustable relation between hijras and the mainstream population can be ensured.

Jonak Hijra, a community representative elaborated an example on discrimination against this community even in public transports, where separate seats for women are allocated but there is no such benefit for this community. She added that, the present organizations should create job positions for this community, so that they can start living a dignified life.

From this discussion, Bandhu gathered some effective recommendations which can be applied in future interventions.

**STUDENT FELLOWSHIP AWARD GIVING CEREMONY 2019**

Bandhu Social Welfare Society is providing fellowships to the students of different universities since 2015. In 2019, Bandhu provided fellowships to 14 students from University of Dhaka, North South University and Independent University, Bangladesh. The fellows produced 09 researches and a documentary on gender diversity rights and issues.

To acknowledge the efforts of the fellows, Bandhu organized the award giving ceremony on Student Fellowship at Sirajul Islam Lecture Hall, University of Dhaka on 5th December 2019. A total of 122 participants representing different community attended the award giving ceremony program.

The program was inaugurated by the welcome dance of Anannya Banik who is a community representative. Mr. Shale Ahmed thanked the respective universities for being part of this fellowship program in his welcome remarks.
After that, a documentary on gender diverse community titled "Mx. A Day in Life" was screened. The documentary was developed by the 5 fellows of Media & Communication department, Independent University, Bangladesh.

14 fellows have received awards from the honorable guests and shared their experience. They promised to continue work for the betterment of gender diverse population in Bangladesh.

Prof. Robaet Ferdous, University of Dhaka said "Though the state has recognized hijra as another gender till now they are deprived of their inheritance because our personal laws don't mention the proportion of a hijra on their inheritance."

Slavica Radosevic, AOR of USAID thanked Bandhu for the fellowship program and by that fellowship program she feels Bandhu should take more initiative, which are related to youth people as well as the students to learn and aware about gender diverse population.

Prof. A.S.M Amanullah from University of Dhaka mentioned that, "There are some laws and regulations for hijra's but these are not adequate to ensure hijra community's rights". He recommended Bandhu to open a wing which will help the government to make laws and policies for the wellbeing of this community.

The Chief Guest Prof. Rasheda Irshad Nasir- Chairperson, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka said, "There are different types of people exists in our society and Hijras are one of them". She added "Unless we make a friendly approach between the community and the mainstream population, we can never be able to fill the gaps."

Lastly, Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta again thanked all the universities for being part of this fellowship program. Then the program ended with a group photo session with the fellows and the guests.

VARIous DAY OBSERVATIONS OF BANDHU

To increase awareness and knowledge among Gender Diverse Population as well as the mass people, Bandhu celebrated World Mental Health Day on 10 October, International Transgender Day of Remembrance on 20 October and Human Rights Day on 10 December. In order to celebrate these days, Bandhu conducted various programs like- talk show, social media campaign, rally, workshop, seminar etc. where more than 741 participants attended the programs.

World Mental Health Day

According to the tagline 'Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention' Bandhu developed 15 Info-graphical

বিভিন্ন দিবস উদযাপন বন্ধু

সার্বিক মন্দিরের মাঝে সৌভাগ্য চর্চায়ভাব এবং মন বুদ্ধির জন্য বন্ধু ১০ অক্টোবর আত্মীয়তা মানবীয় বাংলা দিবস, ২০ অক্টোবর আত্মীয়তা উদ্যোগের চিত্তিকল্পিত দিবস এবং ৩০ ডিসেম্বর মনুষ্যত্বের দিবস

বিবিশিষ্ট বিষয়ক প্রচরণ এবং আত্মীয়তা প্রতিভার” এই প্রচার নিয়ে আত্মীয়তা মানবীয় বাংলা দিবস পালন করা বন্ধু। বন্ধুর আত্মীয়তা লোক লেখক এবং বন্ধুর ফেসবুক পাগল এবং বন্ধুর ফেসবুক পাগল একটি ইন্টারনেট
cards and a video stating various information related to mental health issues. These 15 cards and the video was circulated through Bandhu official Facebook page as well as through a separate event on Facebook. Till now the video has reached 53 thousand people from all over the Bangladesh and still counting.

On this day, Bandhu also participated in the Mental Health Fair organized by Bangladesh Psychological Association (BPA) at TSC premises, University of Dhaka. During this Mental Health fair, our stall, services and presentation achieved third prize among 17 organizations according to an assessment done by BPA.

International Transgender Day of Remembrance:

To celebrate the day, Bandhu organized a talk show at Jamuna TV with the title “ঘেঁষ্ট ও সামাজিক।” The duration of the talk show for 30 minutes where 2 Hijra community representatives participated and shared their views. Approximately 81,500 viewers enjoyed this talk show. In addition, Bandhu organized 4 open discussion sessions at Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna and Mymensingh.

World Human Rights Day:

Bandhu observed this day in association with National Human Rights Commission, District administration and civil society in 8 divisional cities. The theme of this day was "Youth standing up for Human Rights." Different events e.g. Rally, consultation, seminar held in different divisional cities to celebrate this day. Bandhu celebrated this day in 8 divisions with a total of 454 participants.

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