25 Years of Togetherness with the Community

2021 ANNUAL REPORT
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Bandhu sincerely acknowledges the noteworthy contributions of all project members to
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Bandhu Media Center

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Department of Medicine
BSMMU
PILLAR 3: SOCIAL ENTITLEMENT AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social Entitlement

Employability/Livelihood

Emergency and Humanitarian Response

Covid-19 Pandemic: Bandhu’s Response

ENABLING ACTION

Essence of Soul - A core dance group of Bandhu

Advocacy, Networking, and Awareness

Partnerships and Coalition in 2021

Kinnor Kahon: An initiative by the Intern Doctors

Express Solidarity through the celebration of different days

Bandhu is in the Digital Age

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<td>APFSD</td>
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<td>ART</td>
<td>Antiretroviral Therapy</td>
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<td>Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>Bangladesh Medical Student's Society</td>
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<td>DLLG</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
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<td>GDPWG</td>
<td>Gender Diverse Population Working Group</td>
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<td>GOB</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
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<td>HIV-ST</td>
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<td>HTC</td>
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<td>ICDDR,B</td>
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<td>IDAHOT</td>
<td>International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Government Organization</td>
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<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population Development</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education &amp; Communication</td>
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<td>IRI</td>
<td>International Republican Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>Law Enforcement Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>MEA</td>
<td>Men Engage Alliance</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>MSM</td>
<td>Male having Sex with Male</td>
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<td>MSW</td>
<td>Male Sex Workers</td>
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<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
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<td>MOSW</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Welfare</td>
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<td>MOHFW</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</td>
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<td>MOYS</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
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<td>National Board of Revenue</td>
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<td>NCTB</td>
<td>National Curriculum and Textbook Board</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-government Organization</td>
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<td>NHRC</td>
<td>National Human Rights Commission</td>
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<td>NLASO</td>
<td>National Legal Aid Services Organization</td>
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<td>NID</td>
<td>National Identity</td>
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<td>NLC</td>
<td>National Law Commission</td>
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<td>NASP</td>
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<td>NCD</td>
<td>Non-Communicable Disease</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organization</td>
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<td>PFT</td>
<td>Project Facilitation Team</td>
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<td>Primary Health Care</td>
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<td>PLHIV</td>
<td>People living with HIV</td>
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<td>RBM</td>
<td>Result Based Monitoring</td>
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<td>RHRN</td>
<td>Right Here Right Now</td>
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<td>SBCC</td>
<td>Social Behavioral Change Communication</td>
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<td>SCORA</td>
<td>Standing Committee on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights including HIV and AIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<td>SHEA</td>
<td>Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse</td>
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<td>SGM</td>
<td>Social Group Meeting</td>
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<td>STD/STI</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infection</td>
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<td>SHG</td>
<td>Self Help Group</td>
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<td>SRHR</td>
<td>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights</td>
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<td>SOGI</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity</td>
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<td>TB</td>
<td>Tuberculosis Bronchitis</td>
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<td>TG</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
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<td>UDHR</td>
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<td>Universal Periodic Review</td>
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<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>YGDP</td>
<td>Youth Gender Diverse Population</td>
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We could not be more excited to share the Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu’s) Annual Report 2021 with you.

Time has come to transform the systems that shape our lives. The continuing challenges posed by Covid-19 in 2021 have impacted the way we used to work during the pre-pandemic times. But at the same time, this pandemic has also revealed many alternative ways of continuing our work in so many innovative ways based on our adaptability, resilience and readiness to support each other.

We are proud to say that, while going through the achievements as laid out in this Annual Report, we have observed the level of dedication and resilience shown by our colleagues to meaningfully contribute to social justice through Bandhu’s organizational work.

Despite the devastating impact of the ongoing pandemic, it has been another productive year. This Annual Report is a testament to the hard work we have all done collectively throughout 2021. We would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and love for everything you have been doing to advance human rights, equality and gender justice in society.

On this note, we would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our development partners, allies, community members, and volunteers who have given us support in continuing with our work.

We are very happy to share with you that this year Bandhu launches its 5th Strategy Plan 2022-2026. The new strategic plan reflects a changing world, and to accelerate our efforts and transform our programs, we will give more priority to the needs of people we are working with. And these cannot be achieved without increasing the focus on the rights and inclusive participation of people from all intersections.

It is said that remaining strong during hard times is a sign that an organization is doing things right. Moving forward, we will continue to put our efforts into the coming year, in the hope of making it the best year for us and for what we believe in and fight for!
BACKGROUND

Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) is a community-led organization which started its journey in 1996. It is a national non-governmental and non-profit organization. It has been registered with the Social Welfare Directorate (registration number DHA 03879) in July 1997 and the NGO Affairs Bureau (1225) under Foreign Donation Regulation Act in December 1997. It aims to improve issues of health services (including SRHR, HIV, and STI), human rights and social position for gender-diverse people (GDP) in Bangladesh.

All activities of the organization are in line with the overall guidance provided by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), the Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW), the Ministry of Youth and other key ministries of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The principles, activities and approaches of Bandhu correspond to national priorities for healthcare interventions and are directly linked with the current National Health Policy and National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS response. Bandhu’s activities have significantly contributed to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by the government, particularly Goals 1, 3, and 6.

For over two decades, Bandhu has been working in Bangladesh to address many challenges faced by gender-diverse people, including health and human rights issues, HIV and AIDS service needs, and fighting stigma and discrimination while scaling up universal access to HIV and AIDS services. Legal and social barriers further aggravate these challenges. Apart from these, there are many other challenges such as creating access to livelihood options, and education and other basic citizen services that the GDP face in Bangladesh. Bandhu, through its substantive work with gender diverse communities, has witnessed that in Bangladesh they face challenges in accessing citizen services in general, and sexual and reproductive health services in particular. More often than not, they face discrimination, stigmatization and harassment on the grounds of their sexuality and behavioural differences. All these factors have influenced Bandhu to develop its strategy and approach to address the needs of gender diverse communities in Bangladesh. In so doing, it has become a leading organization to work with and for gender diverse communities not only in Bangladesh but also in South Asia.

VISION

Bandhu Social Welfare Society envisions a society where every person leads a quality life irrespective of their gender identity and sexuality.

MISSION

Bandhu works towards ensuring a safe and dignified life for sexual and gender diverse population by protecting their human rights, sexual reproductive health, and ensuring their access to social security and justice.
The Theory of Change of Bandhu’s 4th Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Bandhu’s Theory of Change

Mission
Bandhu works towards ensuring a safe and dignified life for sexual and gender diverse population by protecting their human rights, sexual and reproductive health, and ensuring their access to social security and justice.

Vision
Bandhu envisions a society where every person leads a quality life irrespective of their gender identity and sexuality.

Achieved by
Development Pillars

Access to Quality Health Care
Protection of human rights & access to justice
Social protection social entitlements

Foundation of
Community Systems Strengthening & Public System Strengthening

Enablers
Capacity Building
Advocacy
Organizational Development
Knowledge Management

In line with the values and principles, and the Theory of Change adopted by the 4th Strategic Plan, the activities Bandhu conducted have contributed to achieving the organization’s overarching vision, mission and goal, which is to work towards a future where gender-diverse people (GDP) enjoy the same quality of life as the general population in a society, and also, where their human rights are protected.
1. Drafted a Transgender Protection Act with the support of the National Human Rights Commission and submitted it to the NHRC.

2. Conducted a study on Gender-Based Violence and a Policy Brief on 'Gaps in Legal Protections Against Gender-based Violence for Transgender Persons in Bangladesh' was developed.

3. More than 120 event-based news has been published in different media. The print coverage these media publications provided reached more than 1.5 million people. This large population was offered knowledge of and insight into gender-diverse communities and was also sensitized to their rights and acceptance issues.

4. With the support from UNFPA and UNAIDS Bandhu introduced HIV self-testing services and 1,400 young and adolescent GDP were reached throughout the year.

5. Bandhu produced a series talk show titled 'TRANS TALK'. Broadcast on Bangla Vision, the show focused on mental health, SRHR, human rights, livelihood, and Gender-Based Violence.

6. Health Services Integration in Govt facilities and with support from Global Fund, Bandhu started a Pilot initiative at Narayangonj.

7. Bandhu was nominated as Secretariat for Men Engage Alliance (MEA) and strengthened networking and building the capacity on GDP for Men Engagement Alliance.

8. Bandhu supported 5,366 community people directly and 3,316 through different stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. Developed SRHR mobile apps for the young and adolescents.

10. An animated video promo titled 'Surokkhito Jibon' was developed and uploaded to the Bandhu website.
11. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is endorsed in the National Curriculum.


13. National Budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year declares a 5% waiver in corporate tax for mainstreaming the livelihood opportunities.

14. Media Editors were more sensitized to GDP’s rights issues and produced different programmes focusing on TG people at a subsidized rate.

15. A total of 82 cases out of 113 were successfully resolved through the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism at the local level.

16. 1,225 community people were enrolled in the educational programme, 2,600 in the old age allowance and 1,920 transgender people in vocational training schemes under the Safety Net programme of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

17. Five community people received national and international awards for their contributions to the TG community across the country.

18. Five new CBOs have been formed in 2021 with the technical assistance of Bandhu and 25 CBOs received grants from other sources.

19. 37 community people got employment opportunities in different companies.

20. Free Medical Camp was organized in partnership with SCORA and BMSS Bangladesh.
In many respects, this year was momentous for Bandhu as the organization began working with a renewed sense of purpose to complete the implementation process and achieve the goals set by the five-year strategic plan by the end of the year. Bandhu's essential vision, mission, and purpose never wavered, even in the face of the great disruption caused by the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020. The Covid-19 arrived and altered the year in ways we had never experienced before, posing extraordinary obstacles as well as unforeseen opportunities, resulting in a massive shift in the financial world and service sectors across the globe. Individuals and organizations were compelled to consider what was most important in the present and reevaluate future objectives.

Since the beginning of this year, Bandhu has begun to consider its strategic orientation for the next decade. The organization has just finished its 4th Strategic Plan (SP) for the years 2017-2021 and is presently preparing to launch its 5th Strategic Plan for the years 2022-2026.

Bandhu has been successfully catering to the healthcare needs and human rights issues of the Gender Diverse Population through various interventions. It aims to achieve its targeted results and reach many milestones on its path to fulfill its mission in terms of impact and growth in the new normal against the backdrop of Covid-19. Despite numerous challenges including funding gaps around the world in 2021, Bandhu has effectively responded to the impacts and operational setbacks created by the pandemic and efficiently maintained its progress towards the betterment of its target population throughout the year with strong governance and oversight. As a result of this, the gender diverse people (GDP) has had access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and other stepping stones to a prosperous life, regardless of their gender and/or sexuality identities.

Bandhu’s Pillar 1 "Improved Access to Quality Health Services" has directly contributed to the achievement of SDG 3, which aims to enhance health, equity, and well-being in all nations by 2030. This year, all of the aligned activities involved comprehensive HIV service delivery activities, ART screening and referral to government hospitals for long-term treatment, and outreach activities which included interactions with the community through the DIC and Sub-DIC, HIM Centers, and Wellness Centers at various intervention areas across the country—all of which were supported by multiple donor agencies under the overall leadership and guidance of the AIDS/STD Programme under the MDG (MoHFW). Bandhu has made an enormous effort to integrate health services at government health facilities as a pilot scheme under a Global Fund-supported project. In addition, to address the gap and promote the HIV Self-Test (HIV ST) facility among young GDP in Bangladesh, Bandhu, UNFPA, and UNAIDS have jointly developed a mobile application...
as a knowledge hub to ensure dissemination of accurate and adequate HIV ST-related information and provide services to the young GDP.

Protection of human rights and access to justice is a major pillar of the 4th SP and is connected with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (2017-2022). Violations of the GDP's rights are frequent in Bangladesh; hence, Bandhu's lobbying activities with multiple stakeholders are critical to improving the rights issues by enabling the GDP's access to justice at all levels. Despite the recurrence of Coronavirus infections and lockdowns over prolonged periods, Bandhu has achieved practically all of the goals outlined in the Operational Plan for 2021. Bandhu has convened the Election Commission of Bangladesh's first nationwide consultation, concentrating on a delicate topic and determining the function of the Election Commission concerning those who are unable to identify their parents as legal guardians. The BBS has agreed to include the TG community in the national Census for the first time, which is a direct outcome of Bandhu's ongoing advocacy efforts with BBS. The BBS has already produced a training module for enumerators and shared it with Bandhu for feedback. In addition, the NCTB has decided to include issues and needs of hijras and Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the national curriculum with a particular objective. Finally, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been included in the National Curriculum, which is now being developed.

In 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding was prepared between DYD and Bandhu, and presented to the Ministry of Youth and Sports for the next course of action. The NHRC has decided to construct a TG Act, and Bandhu, in partnership with the NHRC, drafted and submitted the Transgender Protection Bill. A total of 25 District Legal Aid Officers (DLAO) from around the nation attended Bandhu’s two consultations at the NLASO conference room. The Technical Working Group was reformed by Bandhu, who reshaped and renamed it. The group's new name is Task Force (TF), and it now has 19 members, including representatives from all clusters. Bandhu organized the first-ever meeting with media gatekeepers in Cox's Bazar; 12 editors from renowned print and electronic media outlets attended the meeting. Using the example of neighboring nations, a consultation meeting/workshop was conducted with Hijra Gurus to begin the process of building a National Transgender Welfare Board. The TG Act has been highlighted as a new priority issue as a result of this community survey. Bandhu has followed the necessary procedures in partnership with the National Human Rights Commission to go forward with this. Besides, Bandhu conducted two consultations with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) in Rajshahi Division, to sensitize them at the local level to the overall situation of harassment and violence faced by the GDP in Bangladesh, so that the LEA can take appropriate measures in divisional cities across the country and assist Bandhu's Ain Alap unit (a legal helpline) in improving the situation. The
Hijra Livelihood initiative has been implemented by the Ministry of Social Welfare's Social Welfare Services since 2011, and the Hijra Neetimala (Hijra Guideline) was recently reviewed in consultation with all key parties, including Bandhu. Bandhu offered essential inputs for future rectification through group efforts throughout the session.

Bandhu made several efforts to secure social entitlement, including social protection, for the GDP. One of our main tasks was to establish connections with important stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Social Welfare's Social Welfare Services, and to look for suitable opportunities for the community. Bandhu began working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) as part of the community system’s development and good governance. Bandhu sponsored the formation of five new Community-Based Organizations in 2021. Bandhu offered technical assistance in developing their various policies and proposals, as well as helping them obtain registration from the Department of Social Services and the Department of Youth Development. As a result of Bandhu's unflagging work, 25 CBOs received a minor grant from various donors, including Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and BLAST.

Through numerous efforts such as awareness campaigns, training programs, and participation in decision-making process, the organization is also cultivating young leadership across gender-diverse communities. Resultantly, young leaders took part in a variety of national, regional, and international forums to contribute meaningfully by giving voice to their thoughts. Various entities, including the government of Bangladesh, acknowledged such leadership among gender-diverse
people in 2021. Bandhu organized a considerable number of capacity-building training sessions on leadership, life skills, and other needs-based vocational training throughout the reporting year. A total of 100 members of the community were given vocational training.

Last year also provided the organization with the chance to learn about and participate in advocacy, networking, and raising awareness. Bandhu's main efforts included local-level orientation, sensitization, networking, and advocacy to create an enabling environment and smoothen service delivery for the community. Bandhu worked with multi-level stakeholders on advocacy, networking, and awareness-raising efforts to create an enabling climate and raise general awareness about many sensitive topics. Bandhu also demonstrated its commitment and expressed solidarity to the cause of human rights by commemorating several international days. International Women's Day was one of the notable days in 2021. The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO†) is a day dedicated to raising awareness about homophobia and transphobia. In addition, 'Essence of Soul', a core dance group of Bandhu, performed on different platforms as a part of mass awareness campaign. Bandhu also arranged relief materials and logistic support for the community across the country, as reflected in its periodic Covid updates. Bandhu developed a partnership with Rutgers, BRAC, Naripokkho, Oboyo, Christian Aid, Nagorik Uddog, Wave Foundation, BLAST, WDDF, Oraddya, BNSK, she decides, Spark, Space, Women window, Action aid, Bonnisikha, Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB), and MenEngage Alliance.
Bandhu implements the program at the country level following two modalities of direct implementation and partnership. The partnership model is a consortium and coalition with different CSOs and CBOs. In 2021, Bandhu directly provided services to a total of 24,387 gender diverse people (GDP); among them, 19,395 were from male groups, 854 from gender variant women groups, and 4,138 from transgender women and Hijra communities. This coverage is 17.42% of the total GDP based on the size estimation determined by AIDS/STD Program (ASP) in 2015. Bandhu has also covered 12,235 people from the GDP through a partnership with 40 CBOs in different districts in Bangladesh, which constitutes 9% of the country's total GDP.
HEALTH SERVICES
The Government of Bangladesh envisions achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through public and private partnership. The pillar-one of Bandhu has directly contributed towards achieving SDG 3, which is to improve health, equity and well-being by 2030 in countries at all levels of development. The programs such as HIV prevention care and support, SRHR, mental health and counseling are the key features of Bandhu’s health care program.

Throughout the year, despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic all over the world, Bandhu has been able to efficiently maintain its significant level of progress for the betterment of its program beneficiaries (especially gender diverse population). In 2021, Bandhu has emphasized young and adolescent GDP’s sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR), along with emergency response to the various needs of GDP in the context of the new normal, that is to say, the Covid-19 pandemic.

Comprehensive HIV Services
Bandhu has been providing comprehensive HIV services to the GDP through Drop-in-Centers (DIC), Sub Drop-in-Centers (Sub-DIC), HIM Centers, Wellness and Well-being Centers in different intervention areas supported by multiple donors/funding agencies with the overall leadership and guidance of AIDS/STD Programme under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW). The main objectives are to prevent new HIV infections, reduce incidents and HIV-related morbidity and mortality in Bangladesh among key populations (especially among the gender-diverse population). Bandhu is providing comprehensive HIV services following two implementation modalities—center-based and outreach-based services. In the year 2021, a total of 24,387 gender-diverse people have been reached through quality and free health services. Bandhu conducted 16,781 HIV tests, 8,624 STI episodes, and 8,247 episodes of general health services, which were provided among the gender diverse people. Alongside, 16,851 TB screenings have been done as well as 53 suspected TB cases were referred for further tests and support from the referral centers. During this period, a total of 65 PLHIV have been identified and referred to the Govt. ART centers for treatment, care and support.
Reach People under HIV and SRH services

- Male: 19,395
- Female: 854
- Transgender: 4,238

Services

- Treated STI: 8,624
- HIV Tested: 16,781
- Identified HIV+: 76
- Refer to TB: 53
Health Services Integration at Government Health Facilities

As per a plan conceived by the Government of Bangladesh, the health services, including HIV services, of the Global Fund project will be shifted to government health facilities from NGO setups. As such, the Global Fund project has been initiated to integrate health services with government health facilities for the marginalized, especially gender diverse populations. This initiative is being piloted in different districts in Bangladesh. Narayanganj is one of them where Bandhu is operating a drop-in-center for the gender-diverse populations. At Narayanganj, the 300-bed hospital is selected for this piloting as well as providing health services to the gender-diverse populations. To minimize gaps between service providers and GDP, and thus ensure discrimination-free and non-judgmental health services from the hospitals, the project organized an inauguration event with health professionals of government and non-government hospitals in Narayanganj.

Untold Story of Mx. Purnima

Mx. Purnima lived in a miserable condition of extreme poverty. She started her profession as a sex worker/escort to earn her livelihood; she worked with a popular sex selling online app in Dhaka (under South City Corporation). She was infected with sexually transmitted infection because of unprotected sex with clients. She visited Bandhu DIC through a peer educator and received STI treatment and counseling following WHO guidelines and recovered within the expected time. She is much better now considering her physical condition and mental wellbeing. She is happy with Bandhu's healthcare services and expressed her honest opinion while talking about this: "I feel relaxed now that I have become an STI-free person. I have gained knowledge of STI and HIV prevention-related precautions, so I no longer rely on the handsome partners who give me more money for having sex without a condom. I am trying my level best to keep my promise effectively and I am very grateful to the DIC of Bandhu Social Welfare Society for this excellent healthcare service opportunity".
At the event, the superintendent of Narayanganj Sadar hospital said that the hospital was providing services to the GDP. He added that though there was some disruption to services, now the hospital was fully prepared to resume its services to GDP. He urged all health professionals of the hospital to provide nonjudgmental services to all clients, including the gender-diverse populations. The GDP is also advised to come to the hospital for different services.

HIV Self-Testing

In the context of Bangladesh, youth and adolescent groups [Age between 15-24] have limited scope for regular HIV testing facilities from the existing HIV intervention centers/government facilities due to unavailability of youth and adolescent-focused services within those setups. Besides, they also face a lot of challenges related to differences in class, age gaps, fear of confidentiality breach, and isolation. On the other hand, it has also been revealed that many of these group members suffer from STI and other health-related difficulties (including HIV). To address this gap and to promote the HIV Self-Testing (HIV ST) facilities in Bangladesh, Bandhu, UNFPA, and UNAIDS jointly developed and conducted a "pre-intervention assessment on HIV Self-Test (HIV ST)" to find out the practical necessities and perceived needs of the gender-diverse populations. Based on the pre-intervention assessment findings and recommendations received from a consultative workshop (along with ASP, DGHS, and UNFPA), Bandhu has developed a mobile application as a knowledge hub to ensure accurate and adequate HIV ST related information and provide services to young gender diverse populations. As part of this activity, Bandhu also organized an HIV Self Testing Campaign to promote accessible HIV self-testing services among the most vulnerable populations of youth and adolescent MSM and transgender people all across the country, including unreached locations.

The event was inaugurated by the US Ambassador of Bangladesh, HE Earl R. Miller. The entire campaign venue consisted of four corners (e.g. HIV Self-testing corner, Art Therapy corner, Film Screening corner, and an info desk) where HIV self-testing facilities were available, PLHIV related videos were played and Social Behavior Change Communication materials were available for all the guests and attendees. During this period, Bandhu implemented HIV self-testing (HIV ST) service and reached 1,400 youth and adolescent gender diverse community persons through five divisional HIM centers under a UNFPA-supported project.
SPARSHA: A Vibrant Platform to Lead Positive Living with HIV

SPARSHA is a platform of 350 PLHIV members of gender-diverse communities under Bandhu. This platform works through peer motivation mechanisms aimed at living positively with HIV. Members of SPARSHA share their experiences on how to live a productive life without spreading HIV among others. Newly identified PLHIV are able to understand the needs and importance of treatment, care, and support services.

SPARSHA facilitates the strengthening of referral mechanisms with government antiretroviral therapy (ART) centers to ensure antiretroviral therapy (ART) and baseline pathological tests of gender diverse PLHIVs. As a result, SPARSHA members are getting continuous ART support from the government ART centers across the country without any disruption, which is significantly impacting ART adherence.

SPARSHA is regularly organizing (Monthly/Bi-monthly) social day with its old and new members across the country. On a social day, meeting members share their experiences with others, discuss HIV status disclosure issues, self and partner HIV testing, and treatment adherence. As such, most of the PLHIV members are now confident about a productive life with HIV and 95% of PLHIV are maintaining ART adherence.
Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is a substantial component for the well-being of gender diverse populations. Bandhu emphasizes SRHR for this community, including young and adolescent gender diverse people. Through the Right Here Right Now (RHRN) program in Bangladesh, Bandhu aims to ensure that young people in all their diversity enjoy their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in gender-just societies. Bandhu seeks to harness the power of the young marginalized groups, including girls, young women, and young gender-diverse people, and increase public support for SRHR, through improved and revised policies and laws, and a strong civil society.

By identifying gaps of SRHR needs and mapping of SOGI young people, Bandhu established fifteen youth circles (including five HIM centers) throughout the country where 150 YGDPs were affiliated as volunteers to reach out to other YGDPs, so that SRHR information could be shared and inclusive YGDP participation could be ensured. Capacity strengthening is a flexible and inclusive process that ensures equal opportunities and empowerment for young gender diverse populations. Hence, different capacity-building initiatives have been taken to empower YGDPs and strengthen links and networks for the promotion of sexual reproductive health rights and services, and gender justice and response as well. A total of 238 YGDPs have empowered themselves by receiving SRHR information and education. In addition, Bandhu has developed SRHR Apps for young people and adolescents to shore up the SRHR information dissemination and response process.
‘HIM’: A Youth Friendly Services for the Young and Adolescent

‘HIM’ is a dedicated corner established in 2013 in Dhaka to address the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) issues for the young gender diverse populations. Later on, it expanded to Chittagong, Mymensingh, Khulna, and Sylhet. ‘HIM’ aims to create a safe space for young gender diverse people to inspire young leadership. ‘HIM’ facilitates mental, psychosexual, and physical well-being through different initiatives like photo exhibitions, artwork therapy, video contest, etc.

All ‘HIM’ centers are run by youth leaders and volunteers who widens networks and strengthens community participation, bearing in mind the need for young-adult partnership and intersectional approaches. In 2021, approximately 2,500 youths and adolescents were affiliated with ‘HIM’ centers to learn about SRHR; they also contributed to HIV self-testing, STI diagnosis and treatment, ART adherence, and employability linkage, besides participating in programs organized by national, regional, and international platforms.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
Mental and Psychological Well Being of the Community

Considering the importance of community mental health, Bandhu established two different helplines titled, “PORICHOY” and “POSSIBILITY”, to give mental health support to gender diverse populations. Bandhu has four expert counselors who provide counseling services five days a week (Sundays to Thursdays). In the year
2021, PORICHOY and POSSIBILITY provided counseling on HIV prevention and treatment, and psychosocial, psychosexual and intersectional issues to a total of 2,036 GDP. Also, Bandhu refers some cases to Government and NGO platforms in Bangladesh. Bandhu has also developed a pocket album with ten flashcards that contained important messages to support GDP suffering from mental health issues. This album reached over 2,500 targeted GDP. A mental health related poster has been developed to help a range of people to keep sound health and mind in these challenging times, which was viewed by 18,000 people online and 25 offline.

SERVICES FOR NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE (NCD)

Bandhu has been providing services for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) among the gender-diverse community people as part of comprehensive health services. NCD services are being provided through ten drop-in-centers in Dhaka, Chattogram, and Sylhet divisions. In the reporting year, Bandhu provided NCD services on a very limited scale due to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the client’s medical history and physical records (height, weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, BMI), Bandhu’s in-house doctor provided services following the tele medicine approach.

In addition, clients were also referred to appropriate places for further support. In 2021, a total of 333 gender diverse people received NCD services from centers of Bandhu. The details of the NCD status are as below:

### Blood Glucose Status

- **Normal (90%)**: 301
- **High (4%)**: 12
- **Very High (2%)**: 6
- **Low (4%)**: 14

### Blood Pressure Diagnosis

- **Pre-Hypertensive**: 28
- **Pre-Hypotensive**: 19
- **Normotensive**: 277
- **Hypertensive**: 9

![BMI and Blood Pressure Status of GPD in 2021](chart.png)
In order to protect their rights of gender diverse population at all levels, Bandhu's advocacy work with multilevel stakeholders is essential. The 4th Strategic Plan (SP) of Bandhu (2017-2021) is aligned with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); therefore, one of the core pillars of SP is Protection of Human Rights and Access to Justice. Bandhu conducts all activities in line with its 4th Strategic Plan and Operational Plan, which is usually developed every year. Accordingly, Bandhu developed an Operational Plan in 2021 and achieved almost all the targets despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 situation. It can fairly be said that what helped Bandhu reach its goal is its Policy Advocacy.

**PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Commitment to Developing Inclusive Society by the Election Commission**

This is the first time a national consultation was organized by the Election Commission of Bangladesh with a focus on very sensitive issues. The major agenda of the consultation was to identify the role of the Election Commission regarding the people who are not allowed to identify their parents as legal guardians. In Bangladesh, “the name of a Father” is essential on any NID. Besides, the Hijra community faces an extreme level of challenge when they want to use their community names.
rather than their original names which appear on their birth certificates and other official documents. A total of 100 participants including government officials from different ministries along with different UN agencies and civil society organizations attended the consultation. KM Nurul Huda, honorable Chief Election Commissioner, was present as the chief guest while Kabita Khanam, honorable Election Commissioner, attended the program as the keynote speaker. In her speech, she discussed the differences between TG and Hijra, the definition of hijra, and reflected on some ongoing debates. Collective recommendations were made through group works involving all participants for broadening their scope of work.

COUNT ME IN:
Role of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) conducts national census every 10 years. As the last census was held in 2011, BBS was planning to conduct a national census in 2020. But due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the process was hampered! Despite such challenges, there was some progress in 2021. A training module for enumerators had already been developed by the BBS and shared with Bandhu for feedback. In the earlier census, the Hijra or TG communities were categorized either as male or female because there was no other option to count them separately beyond the sexual binary. This was the first time BBS had decided to include the TG communities in the national Census as a separate category, which was the direct result of Bandhu’s continuous advocacy efforts with BBS.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB)

Policy Advocacy is a continuous process. Bandhu, therefore, has started a dialogue with the NCTB with a specific agenda since 2015. As the NCTB reviews the curriculum every five years, Bandhu pushes its agenda for the inclusion Comprehensive Sexuality Education along with recognition of the needs of the Hijra communities in the national curriculum. Bandhu also conducted a needs assessment among five schools to understand the real needs of the students. In the process, Bandhu also involved parents and received important recommendations from them, especially about the importance of CSE, supplementary reading materials with relevant stories focusing on issues regarding the Hijra and TG communities. Accordingly, Bandhu, with the support of NCTB, has developed supplementary reading materials for class VI, consisting of stories written by five renowned writers who disseminated them to students in five different schools as part of a project in 2018. An evaluation report of a one-year pilot project was also produced and submitted to NCTB accordingly. That's how Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has finally been incorporated into the National Curriculum. (https://www.thedailystar.net/shout/news/sex-ed-should-be-taught-schools-heres-why-2004997. This is the direct result of Bandhu’s long-term advocacy. Bandhu believes that the needs and the rights issues of the Hijra and TG communities will soon be reflected in the curriculum, a process which is already under way.
Mainstreaming through the Department of Youth Development (DYD) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports

Bandhu developed a good rapport with the Department of Youth Development in 2019 and the main objective of the rapport was to include the GDP in different training programs designed by DYD. To grab the opportunity more effectively, an MoU was signed between DYD and Bandhu, and submitted to the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2021. For this purpose, a series of consultations were arranged between Bandhu, DYD, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports where Bandhu presented the key points of the MoU. The Secretary, Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary, and Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Sports; and the Director-General, Director, and Deputy Directors from DYD attended the meeting. The community's voice was heard by Md. Akhter Hossain, the honorable secretary, who also learned more about the Essence of Soul (Sattaya in Bangla)-a core dance group of Bandhu. At the meeting, he committed to promoting the Essence of Soul in different national programs organized about DYD and provided necessary instruction to implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Bandhu and DYD. As a result of this meeting, the Essence of Soul performed the thematic dance on the National Youth Day 2021. Honorable President Abdul Hamid attended the program as Chief Guest.
TRANSGENDER ACT
Protection of the Rights of TG & Hijra Community in Bangladesh

The Hijra community was acknowledged as Hijra Lingo through a gazette in 2013 by the Govt. of Bangladesh but to date, no laws are there focusing on the rights of TG and Hijra in Bangladesh. A decision was made by the NHRC in Feb 2021 to develop TG Act and upon that, Bandhu in collaboration with NHRC produced Transgender Protection Act and submitted it accordingly. NHRC is now working to arrange community consultation, expert consultation for the next course of action.

DOORSTEP SERVICES
A Collaborative Initiative with National Legal Aid Service Providing Organization (NLASO)

Bandhu received the Observer Membership of the District Legal Aid Committee in 2017 in collaboration with the National Legal Aid Service Providing Organization (NLASO). As a part of this, Bandhu organized two consultations at the NLASO conference room and a total of 47 District Legal Aid Officers (DLAO) attended the programs from across the country. This is a regular process and the main objective of the collaboration is to share updates on Bandhu's legal cell unit “Ain Alap” with partners and ensure support to the community victims at the local level involving the District Legal Aid Officer. These consultations helped Bandhu to initiate Bandhu's work with DLAC members and refer the cases easily to the DLAO at the local level. Bandhu's Watchdog members who are working as local right defenders are now more affiliated with the DLAOs in respective districts. Not only this, Ain Alap-Bandhu's legal help line service is also referring cases to the DLAC regularly, based on the merits of cases.
Reinforce the Taskforce for Gender Diverse Population

To get the community's voice heard by a wider audience as well as receive timely guidelines from high-level influencers, Bandhu restructured the Technical Working Group by reshaping and renaming it. The new name of the group is Task Force (TF), which consists of 19 members involving representatives of all clusters including government officials, members of parliament, UN officials, members of judiciary, academicians, journalists, faith leaders, community representatives, NGOs, CSOs, and CBO partners. Aroma Dutta, member of parliament, is the Chair of the Task Force. The role of the Task Force is to advance the movement of GDP around health and rights issues, particularly around SRH services, and generally around human rights.

In 2021, two meetings were hosted and an action plan was developed by TF member Professor Robayet Ferdous, highlighting the responsibilities of all TF members. The members are providing continuous support to Bandhu in terms of movement building and upholding the human rights of GDP. The members also recommended forming a Parliamentary Caucus for Transgender People to talk about their rights and reserve a seat for a TG representative in parliament for GDP. In 2022 Operational Plan, Bandhu has already planned to start lobbying relevant authorities with the support of the TF Chair.

MEDIA EDITORS
More Commitment, More Programs

In terms of advocacy and creating more reporting scope in different media platforms, Bandhu arranged a first-ever meeting with media gatekeepers in Cox's Bazar, which was attended by a total of twelve editors from renowned print and electronic media outlets. Bandhu started working with media long back but it was quite challenging to bring editors from
different media houses on the same platform because of their busy schedule. Persistent efforts were put in for long to make this happen. The editors who attended the meeting were from the Dhaka Tribune, the Bangla Tribune, the Kaler Kontho, the Prothom Alo, the Jamuna TV, the ATN Bangla, the Jugantor, The Daily Star, the New Age, and the Bangla Vision. Though most of the media houses were closely affiliated with Bandhu Media Forum, the Prothom Alo for the first time joined an event of Bandhu. The main talking point with the editors was to create more scope for reporting on TG and Hijra issues so that media can play a vital role in creating positive vibes about the Hijra and TG communities among mass people. At the meeting, all the editors expressed their commitment to reporting on the needs of TG people; they said recognition of their rights was a prerequisite for an inclusive Bangladesh. As per decisions taken during the meeting, in 2021, Bandhu designed a series of talk shows for Bangla Vision that were aired during 16 days of activism at a subsidized rate, and more than 30,000 viewers watched the shows. Bandhu has decided to continue such consultations with editors every year.

National Transgender Welfare Board in Bangladesh: A Challenge to Initiate

A consultation was organized with Hijra gurus to initiate the process of forming a national transgender welfare board. An expert on law and policy issues was invited to discuss the relevant issues and facilitate the consultation. Examples of neighboring countries like India, Nepal, and Pakistan were cited to understand how they are working to support the transgender communities in their respective countries by forming a TG welfare board. Several recommendations came out of this meeting for forming a board involving government high ups and TG community members. Through this community consultation, a new priority area has been identified and a decision has been reached about a TG Act. Bandhu has taken appropriate steps to move forward with the decision, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). An initial discussion with the NHRC was organized in 2021 and a draft TG Act has been prepared by Bandhu and submitted to the NHRC for review.
Law Enforcement Agencies: One Step Ahead

Over the years, Bandhu identified some key stakeholders and worked closely with them to continue its advocacy of equal rights for Hijra and TG communities. As a part of it, Bandhu organized two consultations with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) in Rajshahi Division in 2021. The main objective of the advocacy events was to sensitize LEA at the local level to the overall situation of harassment of and violence against the GDP in Bangladesh so that LEA can take appropriate measures in divisional cities across the country and assist Bandhu's Ain Alap unit (a legal helpline of Bandhu) to improve the situation. The Rajshahi Police Commissioner and Additional Inspector General of Police attended the events. Altogether 165 participants attended from Rajshahi Metropolitan Police.

Md. Abu Kalam Siddique, Police Commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, graced the occasion as chief guest. He strongly recommended working more on GDP issues to ensure their inclusion in society. Members of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police also expressed their commitment to ensure all kinds of support towards the GDP and assist Bandhu in protecting the GDP's fundamental rights at all levels.

Lawyers Fellowship

Bandhu organized different fellowship programs with several stakeholders, i.e., Lawyers Fellowship, Watchdog Fellowship. These fellowships aim to recognize and promote the human rights of the Gender Diverse Population across the country. This is the fourth fellowship for lawyers and a total of ten lawyers who are members of Bandhu's lawyers' panel as well received the fellowship for 6 months. Under the fellowship, each fellow provided legal counseling and need-based legal support to the victims. In addition, they coordinated with locally influential multi-stakeholders and arranged sensitization programs. A full report of the fellowship assignment was produced by an individual and Bandhu developed a presentation compiling all recommendations and presented them during the fellowship award ceremony. This fellowship established a link between the gender diverse community and attorneys; it also sensitized them as well as people to socio-economic developments affecting gender-diverse people.
LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND:
INITIATIVES FOR THE INCLUSION OF GDP

Equity and Equality
Policy Advocacy is one of our core areas of work. Bandhu, therefore, is continuing evidence-based advocacy with multilevel stakeholders over the last 25 years. While doing advocacy, our main focus was to create access to justice, so that the GDP can enjoy all kinds of rights irrespective of their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). In Bangladesh, the GDP are stigmatized and face discrimination due to their gender identity. We believe the mindset of people has changed over the years and increased opportunities for this community, therefore, are reflected in different sectors. In 2021, the Boishakhi Channel recruited a news presenter from the TG community who proved herself by showing her best skills. She has now become an icon of the TG community and other TV channels including BTV, RTV are showing interest in recruiting news presenters from the TG community. This is one of the direct results of our media advocacy.

Inspiring Initiatives by the Ministry of LGRD and Perfect Example of Mainstreaming
The LGRD Ministry took several initiatives to establish a shelter for the extremely poor in Bangladesh. This initiative was taken to celebrate the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. To develop an inclusive list of beneficiaries, the LGRD Ministry already included the Hijra community with the support of local DCs and handed over shelter homes to 50 hijras in 2021.
Wider strategies of Social Welfare Services to include Hijras in the Mainstream

The Social Welfare Services under the Ministry of Social Welfare has been implementing the Hijra Livelihood program since 2011. It has recently reviewed the Hijra Neetimala (Hijra Guideline) in consultation with all relevant stakeholders including Bandhu. During the consultation, Bandhu provided all necessary feedback for further improvement of the guideline through group work. One of the key recommendations was about the definition of Hijra. Bandhu recommended rethinking for a more inclusive definition of Hijra so that all clusters of TG and Hijra come under the wider definition. Bandhu also arranged an in-depth consultation with the Director of Hijra Livelihood Project under the Ministry of Social Welfare at the Bandhu office and discussed the importance of Hijra Skill Building training sessions and their effectiveness. The DG of Social Welfare is now taking more initiatives to include hijras in different programs; the Essence of Soul, as a result, is being invited in different cultural programs along with other initiatives of Social Services.

A Transgender Community Elected as Union Parishad (UP) Chairman

Article 27 of the Bangladesh Constitution provides that all citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law. Article 28(1) of the Constitution provides that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. But unfortunately, the people from the gender diverse communities were deprived of effective participation in any election process despite equal qualification like other contestants. Bandhu started lobbying local administration members in different divisions along with Election Commission officials for equal access in the election process. The community people are now more confident and ready to compete with other mainstream competitors. In 2021, transgender community member Nazrul Islam Ritu, an independent candidate, has been elected Union Parishad (UP) chairman in Trilochonpur union of Jhenaidah's Kaliganj Upazila in the third phase of UP elections. (https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/first-transgender-person-becomes-chairman-bangladesh-2905066). This achievement is the result of our long-term advocacy as our motto is to empower vulnerable communities through equal participation in all sectors.
5% Corporate Tax Waiver Declared for FY21-22 by Finance Ministry and NBR

According to the national budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year, corporate tax (5%) will be waived if any company recruits 100 members from the transgender community, commonly known as hijras in Bangladesh. The government is implementing this decision to promote the inclusion of the transgender communities into the mainstream society and businesses, according to officials of the Finance Ministry and the National Board of Revenue (NBR). Undoubtedly, this is a praiseworthy decision but in reality, employment opportunities for the GDPs in factories and companies are still scant due to the mindset of mainstream society as well as poor educational background of the hijras. In 2021, Bandhu worked with several companies and provided all kinds of support to make the factory employees oriented towards the rights issues faced by the GDPs. Finally, numerous members from the transgender communities are currently employed in media organizations, hotels, and private universities; at different posts in NGOs and service sectors including health, beauty and food sectors, as well as the leather and garment sectors. Many of them quit their jobs as salary structures of different companies are not enough to meet the livelihood needs of gender diverse community members in a society where inflation rates are hitting new heights every year.

(https://archive.dhakatribune.com/business/2021/05/31/5-corporate-tax-cut-for-employing-100-transgender-people)

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Human Rights Situation of SOGI Population: Cross-Learning and Creating Evidence

To analyze and produce evidence-based documents focusing on the status of the GDP’s rights violation, Bandhu organized an Annual Review workshop for its staff. At the workshop, an overview of Ain Alap services (legal service of Bandhu) was presented with an emphasis on the overall management process of Ain Alap. In the reporting year, Bandhu also developed an Ain Alap operational guideline that was also discussed at the workshop. Based on recommendations received from all stakeholders, an annual report on the GDP’s Human Rights Violations 2021 was produced. The Ain-Alap (legal support unit) operational guideline was reviewed and amended to finalize and address marginalized aspects, as well as deal with the legal issues faced by the community and extend support to them duly.
In addition, later on, the key findings of annual Human Rights Violations report was shared with other organizations working on human rights and gender rights that encouraged them to express solidarity to the cause of the GDP and support them by forming a coalition.

**AIN ALAP: A Wing of Rights Protection**

The GDP are subjected to rampant human rights violations. Bandhu is committed to protecting them by providing them with intensive support. Abductions, arbitrary arrests, imprisonment, gender-based violence (GBV) including beatings and sexual assault, among other violations, have been reported by numerous members of gender diverse communities. Considering the gravity of such violations of their rights, Bandhu has been providing legal aid services through establishing a wing called "Ain-Alap" since 2013. Ain-Alap has been providing legal support and counseling through legal helpline services and case management.

In 2021 Ain-Alap received a total of 494 phone calls and documented 113 human rights violation cases, which were about harassment, assault, property and monetary dispute, discrimination, sexual offense, etc. In the same year, to improve the response mechanism for addressing issues of rights violation, Bandhu also took several initiatives, i.e., Watchdog member fellowship, capacity-building of panel lawyers, and online promotion of Ain-Alap during the Covid-19 lockdown. A total of 82 cases out of 113 were successfully resolved through the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism at the local level, which constituted 72% of all cases, compared to 67% from the previous year. This indicated that beneficiaries at the grassroots are becoming more comfortable with the ADR than the formal justice system. Among the rest of the 31 cases, 23 are going through legal proceedings, five have been referred for further support to panel lawyers, District Legal Aid Committee, and different institutions considering their nature and gravity, and three were withdrawn by the respective beneficiaries.
Advocacy at the International level towards establishing rights of gender-diverse people is an integral part of Bandhu's mission. In 2021, Bandhu strengthened its alliance with international organizations (e.g., SheDecides) to obtain more knowledge about international advocacy by adopting innovative methods. On the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, SheDecides Global developed a virtual gallery through the medium of art where the issues around gender equality and bodily autonomy were celebrated. To enhance the advocacy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in alignment with climate justice, Bandhu jointly organized an event with SheDecides Bangladesh on "SRHR and Climate Justice". Bandhu and its coalition partners attended many global and regional forums and shared their joint voices from Bangladesh on different dimensions of SRHR issues faced by the youths and adolescents. Bandhu's young participants vibrantly participated in the Asia Changemakers Forum in 2021, organized by ARROW, and exchanged their knowledge and experience. And a young person from a gender-diverse community won a small seed grant to run an individual awareness project at the community level.

Bandhu also contributed to the Mid-term Report on the Implementation of the UPR Recommendations (September 2018 - September 2020) in 2021. All the recommendations related to rights of the gender-diverse populations, including Hijra community members and transgender individuals who are not part of the Hijra tradition in Bangladesh, were noted during the third cycle of the UPR. The report was made as a part of the UPR 3rd Cycle (2nd-year review) under the Thematic Area Equality and Non-Discrimination.

In 2022, Bandhu will take initiatives in terms of accountability mechanisms that include: Upcoming Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Mechanism (Youth-led
Youth Participation in the CSW and CPD

The sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) mainly focused on "women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality" as its main theme, and "women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development" as its review theme. In line with this, Bandhu arranged a youth consultation on CSW-65 on 24th February 2021, which was attended by a total of 20 participants. At the meeting, the participants identified the pressing challenges and issues, recognized the relevant duty bearers, and made recommendations for future courses of action.

The workshop on CPD-54 was organized with the aim of identifying the current challenges which are relevant to the CSW-65 theme, as well as generating recommendations from the youth participants on issues of rights and development of the community for drafting the Policy Paper. A total of 39 community people attended the workshop. The following Action Points were agreed on at the workshop:

- Develop counter-narratives against harmful gender norms and social myths, and misconceptions on gender diversity, SRHR, and sexual abuse and violence.
- Increase networking, opportunities and create a platform for youths including young gender diverse populations from all intersectionalities.
- Create segregated data and evidence focusing on young gender diverse groups and follow up and monitor the country's situation. 
- Mobilize support at the community level for age-appropriate Comprehensive Sexuality Education.
PROJECT LAUNCHING

Empowering Left-Behind Minority Communities to Effectively Participate in the Development Process of Bangladesh (ELMC)

In 2021, Bandhu started implementing the project titled "Empowering Left-Behind Minority Communities to Effectively Participate in the Development Process of Bangladesh (ELMC)". This is a four-year project to be implemented from 2021 to 2024 in nine districts in Rajshahi, Sylhet, and Khulna divisions with the support of the European Union and Christian Aid. This project mainly focuses on the left-behind communities especially the Transgender, Hijra, Dalit, and Ethnic Minority communities. To assess the present situation, Christian Aid conducted a baseline survey with the support of all implementing partners (Bandhu, Nagorik Uddyog, BLAST, Wave Foundation, and People with Disability) in nine districts, and prepared a report. To share the survey findings with all relevant stakeholders, Bandhu organized launching programs in line with survey dissemination sessions in Sylhet Sadar, Habiganj, and Moulvibazar. Other districts were covered by the other three partners. Moreover, a central launching program was also organized by Christian Aid at BRAC Inn.

Fazle Hossain Badshah, Honorable Member of Parliament (MP) and Convenor of Parliamentary Caucus on Indigenous and Minority Affairs; K.M. Tariqul Islam, Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau, were present at the central launching program. These launching events helped all stakeholders to understand the project’s objectives and outcomes along with their roles and responsibilities—especially what roles the policymakers, the DC Office, the Social Welfare Services, the Youth Department, and the Women and Children Affairs Ministry should play to ensure all necessary support towards the marginalized communities.

Right Here Right Now 2 (RHRN-2)

RHRN-2 Bangladesh coalition, led by Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) and supported by coalition partners (Naripokkho, BRAC, and Oboyob), officially inaugurated its journey with a beautiful ceremony. Notable personalities graced the event with their lively presence. The National Human Rights Commission Chairman Nasima Begum, NDC joined the ceremony virtually as Chief Guest. Paula Schindeler, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was present as the guest of honor.

The government is emphasizing youth development so that young people can flourish in every sector of the country and make significant contributions to the development process,' said Barrister Shameem Haider Patwary MP who attended the event as a special guest. NHRC Chairman Nasima Begum, NDC, said, 'Bangladesh had achieved independence 50 years ago with a deep sense of equality for all. Unless equal rights for the young generation are ensured, socio-economic development will not be possible as expected.'
To ensure social entitlement including social protection for the GDP, Bandhu initiated various activities. Creating linkage with relevant stakeholders including social welfare services under the Ministry of Social Welfare and exploring suitable jobs for the community was one of our core activities. The gender diverse communities have many potentials but they are always being ignored and deprived due to their gender identity and thus pushed to the margins of society. Considering all possibilities and following the declarations made by the NRB regarding tax waivers, Bandhu identified key employers and worked with them over the years. At the same time, Bandhu initiated different capacity-building training programs for the GDP communities to develop their skills and groom them up for sustainable jobs.

SOCIAL ENTITLEMENT
Community System Strengthening

Bandhu started working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in 2003 on a limited scale and gradually increased the number. Currently, Bandhu is working in partnership with a total of 40 CBOs. In 2021, Bandhu supported forming five new CBOs and these are: a) Amader Bhabna Association, Dhaka, b) Joley Vasha Paddma, Pirojpur, c) Jibon Gathon Unnoyan Shangtha, Dhamrai, d) Prochesta Jonokallyaun Shnagstha, Paba, Rajshahi, and e) Ashar Alo Jubo Kallyaun Shangho, Sunamgonj. Bandhu provided them with all kinds of technical support to develop different policies, e.g. HR and...
administrative policies, M&E policies, financial policies, and good governance policies. Bandhu also assisted them in getting registration from the Department of Social Services and the Department of Youth Development, as well as developing proposals. As a result of Bandhu’s continuous efforts, in 2021, 25 CBOs received a small grant from different donors including Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and BLAST. Bandhu also conducted a mapping of CBOs in 2021 and identified the areas for further improvements. Based on the mapping and training needs assessment, Bandhu arranged a Training of Trainers (ToT) on Good Governance and Human Rights and 39 Executive Committee members of the Community Based Organizations participated in it.

Enrollment in Govt. Social Security Programs

The Government of Bangladesh has been strengthening the area of coverage for social security programs. Under this program, underprivileged and most marginalized people are getting various types of allowances from the government. Transgender people are also eligible for different allowances like education allowance, old age allowance, and vocational training. Over the years, Bandhu conducted various advocacy initiatives with the Social Welfare Services under the Ministry of Social Welfare to push the agenda for including Hijra and TG communities in the safety net programs. As a result, 1,225 enrolled in the educational program, 2,600 in the old age allowance program, and 1,920 in vocational training schemes respectively. For more detail, visit http://www.dss.gov.bd/site/page/e3108b96-8e64-4fb4-be8e-3f2f8e9d27bb/-

Recognition of Youth Leadership

Bandhu is fostering youth leadership among gender diverse populations through various initiatives like awareness campaigns and training sessions. As a result, young leaders participated in different national, regional, and international forums and gave voice to their thoughts in a meaningful way. In recognition of their contributions, youth leaders from gender-diverse populations won many awards in 2021—the most significant of them were the Human Rights Defender Award 2021, the UN Volunteer Award 2021 by UNDP Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina Youth Award by the Government of Bangladesh 2021, the Best Youth Trainer Award 2021 by the Department of Social Services, and the National Youth Award 2021.
EMPLOYABILITY/ LIVELIHOOD

Creating alternative livelihood opportunities for the gender diverse communities is one of the core components of Bandhu. Therefore, Bandhu took several initiatives to equip the GDP with necessary skills after conducting a needs assessment. In the reporting period, Bandhu arranged a significant number of capacity-building training programs on leadership and life skills along with other needs-based vocational training programs, e.g. tailoring, block boutique, and beautification. A total of 100 community people received vocational training under the Manusher Jonno Foundation-funded project of Bandhu. Besides, Bandhu regularly maintained liaison with different training institutes including UCEP and National Youth Development Centre across the country for other courses where community people could get easy access to other training programs. Currently, Bandhu is working with 40 CBOs and providing them with technical support as well. However, in 2021, five new CBOs started small-scale businesses. For example, ABHA started a small garment business; Prachesta Manab Kalyan and Jibon Gathon Unnoyan Sangsthaa opened tailoring shops; Joley Vasha Padma went into handicrafts; and Ashar Alo Jubo Kallyaun Shangho opened a retail shop for readymade garment products. Such initiatives have created many opportunities for people within the community, allowing them to start living in a dignified way.

Besides, Bandhu conducted skill mapping of 57 community people and provided jobs to 37 in different companies, e.g. Yamaha Company, Fair Group, Cross Wear, AVL Factory, BRAC Bank, and BRAC University.

EMERGENCY AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

World's Largest Humanitarian Crisis: Rohingya Response

The influx of Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar has put pressure on the Bangladeshi community, particularly in the upazilas of Teknaf and Ukhia, where the Rohingyas now constitute at least one-third of the total population. This situation has negatively affected approximately 1.2 million host populations. The fear of Covid-19 transmission compounded by the lockdown has already started taking a toll on the economy and the livelihood of people, especially who rely on daily wages. To address these gaps in Rohingya response, Bandhu, with the support of USAID, initiated mental health and HIV referral support services for gender diverse boys, men, trans-women (hijra).

Later on, UNFPA extended its support for the SRHR services by setting up a health center with the aim of achieving universal access to general and sexual reproductive health services for boys, men, and transgender people, whether they are Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMNs) or host community people in Ukhia upazila under Cox's Bazar district.

Through these interventions, Bandhu established a network with national and international organizations, for example, UNFPA, UNHCR, Camp in Charge (CiC) offices, UN office, Site Management Office, and Health Sector Management in Camp; the local administration, e.g. DC office and
UNO office to better assist the GDP from Rohingya and host communities as part of coordination efforts. Bandhu also formed the Gender Diverse Population Working Group (GDPWG), a coalition for effective advocacy campaigns at the local level in Cox’s Bazar. The Working Group regularly shares updates following the annual Action Plan.

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC: BANDHU’S RESPONSE**

In 2021, different variants of the coronavirus (e.g. Delta, Omicron) infected people in Bangladesh like the rest of the world. The Government of Bangladesh has taken timely steps to stop the spread of these variants. For improved protection, the government began providing Covid-19 vaccine booster doses to citizens aged 60 and over, frontline service providers such as doctors, nurses, government officials, and journalists who had taken the two necessary vaccine doses at least nine months ago. Bandhu also took need-based initiatives and services for the GDP.

Bandhu distributed relief items with the help of various sponsors and the local government as well. Bandhu also provided mental health support through counseling by experienced counselors, and health assistance through a dedicated Doctor’s Helpline, which was an endeavor aimed at resolving concerns that arise among the GDP, including Bandhu’s beneficiaries, stakeholders, and staff. Bandhu produced documentaries, published leaflets containing necessary bits of information regarding safety measures and distributed safety and security equipment as well as relief materials among the GDP. In addition, Bandhu established networks and connections with local administrations such as the District Coordinator’s Offices, the Civil Surgeon Offices, and other organizations, to provide further assistance at the local level.

Various organizations helped Bandhu during the pandemic in the reporting period, including the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, ICDDR,B, Global Fund, RFSU, UNFPA, Swedish Embassy Bangladesh, UNAIDS, Outrights, FJS, GIZ, SIDA, WFA, MaMa Cash, German Doctor, UKAID, USAID, AusAID, KT Trust, Subornobhumi and UNDP.

The updates of 2021 on COVID-19 initiatives of Bandhu are highlighted below:

![Bandhu's Initiatives to Response COVID-19 Challenges](image)

Bandhu preserved all kinds of reports, pictures, news links, and expenditure related information for audit purposes.
COVID-19: Director General of NGO Bureau Expressed Solidarity to TG and Hijra

The honorable Prime Minister has provided mass shelter project for the transgender and hijra people. The specialized schools and employment facilities created under the same project could help them for economic emancipation,' said K.M. Tariqul Islam (Additional Secretary), Director General of NGO Bureau, while attending the relief distribution program organised by Bandhu. K.M. Tariqul Islam inaugurated the relief distribution program for one thousand (1,000) transgender and hijra people. Also, Marufa Sultana Khan Hiramoni, Assistant Commissioner of DC office, and Dr. Zhumana Ashrafi Sweety, Medical Officer from the Civil Surgeon office, were present at the event as special guests.

‘If we do not show compassion towards this community, then the government cannot succeed in achieving the sustainable development goals. We have to make sure that the people from the transgender and hijra community can earn a fair livelihood,” said the Director-General. 'The government is working towards fulfilling the prime minister's pledge for this community,' he added.

H.E. Charles Whiteley, Ambassador of EU visited Bandhu's HQ

Ambassador and Head of Delegation of EU H.E. Charles Whiteley visited Bandhu's headquarters on 23rd November 2021. After he was apprised of progress of the EU-supported projects, he interacted with gender-diverse community members, learned about the real situation of human rights violations and access to justice for the community. He also talked about possibilities of further collaboration with the EU in coming days. Anisul Islam Hero, Chairperson of Bandhu, also attended the meeting, along with a core team of Bandhu.
ESSENCE OF SOUL: A CORE DANCE GROUP OF BANDHU

"Essence of Soul" (Sattaya in Bangla) was officially formed in 2006 with the core support of Bandhu. "Essence of Soul" is a dance group that portrays the voice, vulnerabilities, and vital needs of the Gender Diverse Population in terms of human rights and healthcare issues through their mesmerizing performances. The group transforms the mind-frame, social life, and daily challenges into art and depicts those to wider audiences as advocating tools for eradicating stigma, discrimination, and homophobia against this sexual and gender minority cluster. In 2021, Sattaya organized two media shows and nine-stage shows which were watched directly by a total of almost 2,500 people and enjoyed by nearly 100 K viewers through different TV channels.

The most significant show was the National Youth Day celebration where Sattaya performers performed in front of the country’s Honorable President. Moreover, they performed in a special dance show which was developed for Eid-Ul-Adha.
ADVOCACY, NETWORKING, AND AWARENESS

Local-level sensitization, orientation, and advocacy are the core activities of Bandhu. To ensure services towards the community, Bandhu regularly organizes different events at the local level with the support of CBOs. In 2021, Bandhu conducted a total of 22 advocacy campaigns with multi-level stakeholders, which saw the participation of a total of 461 guests across the country. The main objective of those campaigns was to create an enabling environment at the national and local levels. The key stakeholders were District Commissioners, Civil Surgeons, health service providers, legal aid service providing organizations, social welfare service providers, the government's youth department and women and children affairs ministry, CBOs, local elites, Faith Leaders, Journalists, LEA, and LEB and influential persons. These meetings helped them to understand the challenging situation for the GDP in Bangladesh, create awareness about the community, and support them to get equal access to facilities at the local level. In addition, 675 community participants received training from Social Welfare Services and 32 participants received training in Income Generating Activities (IGA). Some Faith leaders already shared the importance of inclusivity of transgender people and their needs during "Khudba" (discussion before the Jumma prayer on Friday). A total of 4,576 and 576 Hijra received Covid-19 support from local authorities, such as DC offices and City Corporations respectively.
PARTNERSHIPS AND COALITION IN 2021

Bandhu started its journey in 1996 with a mission to address the healthcare needs and the human rights issues of gender-diverse populations. After 25 years, our action plans are being implemented countrywide through 27 field offices in 22 districts and 40 partner CBOs across the country, and our services are making a real impact on creating a more inclusive society. Besides, Bandhu developed a network and partnership with other like-minded organizations, development partners, Civil Society Organizations, and also developed collaboration with organisations like Men Engage Alliance. This networking and partnership assisted Bandhu in increasing the coverage of services at all levels. In 2021, Bandhu developed a partnership with:

RHRN2: Right Here Right Now (RHRN) is a global strategic partnership supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Netherlands, and led by Rutgers. Phase 1 of RHRN was completed in 2020 followed by RHRN2 (2021-2025) with a much-evolved outlook. RHRN2 platform, which is having a striking reboot in Bangladesh in 2021, consists of four individual partners with Bandhu Social Welfare Society as the lead organization and BRAC, Naripokkho, and Oboyob as coalition partners. The goal of RHRN2 is that young people in all their diversity enjoy their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in gender-just societies. RHRN2 seeks to unleash the power of youth and increase public support for SRHR, improve policies and laws, and strengthen civil society.

Christian Aid: Bandhu is implementing a project titled "Empowering left-behind minority communities to effectively
participate in the development process of Bangladesh" for four years, starting from 2021 to 2022, through a coalition approach. The other partners of the coalition are Christian Aid, Bandhu, Nagorik Uddog, Wave Foundation and BLAST.

Feminist Organizations: A total of 11 Feminist Organizations such as Naripokkho, WDDF, Oraddya, BNSK, She Decides, Spark, Space, Women Window, Action Aid, Nagorik Uddyog, and Bonnisikha attended a meeting with Bandhu. Some of them were also members of Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB). The purpose of the partnership was to form a coalition with feminist organizations and address the rights violation issues faced by women and gender diverse communities in society.

FPAB and BLAST: Bandhu developed a partnership with the Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) and BLAST to provide all kinds of technical and legal support towards their Hijra and TG-focused projects. Bandhu’s role is to develop different modules and facilitate different training programs as per the need of the partner organizations.

Men Engage Alliance: MenEngage Alliance is an International network of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working with men and boys to promote health and well-being, reduce gender-based violence and discrimination, and realize gender justice for all, by challenging structural barriers to women’s rights and gender equality. There are five regional networks under the global MEA network. Bangladesh belongs to the South Asia alliance where five countries are working together under the Secretariat in Sri Lanka. 46 different grass-roots, national, and international organizations are working together in the Bangladesh alliance. Bandhu is hosting as EMB Secretariat of Men Engage Alliance Bangladesh for 2021-2022.
The ZE Project and Bandhu Social Welfare Society

The Ze Project has been conceptualized by Fashion Theory that has been supported by Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu). The two-year long project that started from 19th October, 2021 had the purpose to help raise funds to support awareness on gender diversity in Bangladesh. It is designed to credit or award the garment factories who actively support the transgender community. The main motif was to create more employment opportunities for the people of the gender diverse community of the country in the garments industry.

The Ze Project was able to source out factories and enroll them in this certification where they will be able to provide support. Bandhu has stood beside this project as a knowledge partner as well; as it is very important to sensitize the both the employees of the factories and the people who will be working with this cluster. This project had a successful branding effort on Bandhu and Fashion Theory's social media channels, where varied news relevant to this endeavor was broadcast throughout the timeline, reaching a large audience. The initial phase of the initiative was a success, and it raised public awareness about the community. Both Bandhu and Fashion Theory hope to expand this effort to a larger audience in order to reach more people and establish an inclusive society where everyone may live in peace and social & gender justice are respected.

In addition, Bandhu ensured needs-based support to the 40 partner CBOs across the country.

KINNOR KAHON: AN INITIATIVE BY THE INTERN DOCTORS

Bandhu Social Welfare Society in collaboration with The Standing Committee on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights including HIV and AIDS (SCORA) and Bangladesh Medical Students' Society (BMSS Bangladesh) organized the event 'Kinnor Kahon' to celebrate Transgender Awareness Week. Series of activities included awareness session with SOS Hermann Gmeiner College Dhaka school and college students, free Health Camp for TG and Hijra, knowledge session on SOGI with intern doctors, and webinar to address the SRH issues of GDP in Bangladesh. A total of 50 students from classes IX to XII attended the session. The session was participatory where Good Touch and Bad Touch, Gender and Sex, Bullying, Menstrual Hygiene, and such topics were discussed.

In the health camp, 20 hijras came to receive free services and had an interactive session with the doctors during the knowledge management session. As a result of the weeklong campaign, the intern doctors received basic information about their lifestyle, traditional culture, gender and sexuality, and SRH service-related challenges. The students of SOS Hermann Gmeiner College Dhaka school and college expressed their commitment to support differently abled children and people with different gender identities, and start a campaign among their friends, parents, and neighbors to promote the cause of the GDP.
EXPRESS SOLIDARITY THROUGH THE CELEBRATION OF DIFFERENT DAYS

In 2021, Bandhu celebrated different days with the most priority to show solidarity through different innovative activities. The Commissioner from National Election Commission, representatives from the Canadian High Commission, the US Embassy, and other national women icons from different sectors attended the event. The significant days that were celebrated were: International women's Day, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT), International Youth Day, Intersex Awareness Day, Mental Health Day, Breast Cancer day, World AIDS Day, Human Rights Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, and National Legal Aid Day. Those were both online and offline events and developed online messages, slogans, posters, and video clips and uploaded them on Bandhu's webpage. Over the years, all these promotional messages reached out to more than 500K viewers.

Bandhu awarded twelve Human Rights Defenders who are known as Watchdog at the local level on IDAHOT. With the collaboration of the government of Bangladesh, Bandhu celebrated the International Youth Day, where the core dance group 'Essence of Soul' performed in front of the Honorable President. Intersex Awareness Day was celebrated to raise awareness about non-consensual medical interventions on intersex people, and their legal and health rights, to build a network and learn about activism for intersex people, and to call for a separate law protecting the rights of intersex people. On Transgender Day of Remembrance, the 'Laila Hijra Memorial Award' was given to the most vivacious community change-maker; the Watchdog Fellowship Award was also given on this occasion. World AIDS Day was celebrated with the theme to prevent the spread of AIDS and raise public awareness with the theme "End inequalities. End Aids. End pandemic".
Orange the World: 16 Days of Activism

The most visible celebration of 2021 was the ‘16 Days of Activism’, Bandhu celebrated it with a huge range of effective activities. The two-week-long activism started on 25th November with the launching of the Advocacy Brief on GBV titled ‘Gaps in Legal Protections Against Gender-based Violence for Transgender Persons in Bangladesh’. To celebrate World Mental Health Day, a Social Media talk show on GBV against Gender Diverse Population was arranged; the show was watched by more than 100K people. Bangla vision, one of the prominent television channels, produced another five-episode talk show titled 'Trans Talk'. The issues were GBV, mental Health, SRH services, Livelihood, and Human Rights. More than 500K people enjoyed the show.

Bandhu Awarded Significant 'Human Rights Defenders' on IDAHOT

Bandhu celebrated the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Bi-phobia (IDAHOT) by honoring the persons who worked dedicatedly for the cause of the gender diverse community. Bandhu circulated a “Call for application for Human Rights defenders”, using its country-wide network and partners, and collected applications from the most efficient and dedicated players from the community. Considering their contribution, 12 people were selected for the award in various categories. Professor Dr. Mizanur Rahman, also former chairman of National Human Rights Commission, was the key speaker at the event. In his speech, he talked about the importance of any acknowledgment, the current law situation and challenges in the country regarding the community and their rights.

Dr. Sacha Blumen, First Secretary, Australian High Commission, Bangladesh; Rosalee La Plante, Counselor Political Affairs, Canadian High Commission, Bangladesh; and H.E. Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden, Bangladesh, were the honorary guests who graced the award-giving ceremony.
In the reporting year, Bandhu conducted a total of nine researches and studies under different projects. One study was conducted on Rapid Assessment to identify coverage and service gaps in different districts for Gender Diverse Populations (GDP) with the core funding support. The main objectives of the study were to analyze the present status and identify gaps that could help plan Bandhu's future programs.

The studies were:

- HIV Self-Testing - Adolescent! Young MSM and Transgender People: A pre and post-intervention Rapid Situation Assessment (UNFPA)
- Baseline and Needs Assessment for the Right Here Right Now 2 (RHRN-2) programs in Bangladesh
- Study on Digital Context Analysis under RHRN-2
- Study on COVID and Post COVID situation amongst Sexual and Gender Diverse population supported by commonwealth equality network

Bandhu IS IN THE DIGITAL AGE!

In 2021, a total of 6,213,358 visitors visited Bandhu's website, 4,46,347 fans and followers reached through Facebook, 10,823 shared their thoughts and solidarity through Twitter, and 1,78,716 viewers watched visual documentaries that were developed by Bandhu.

Bandhu wish to authentic conversations for fans and followers through social media and wish to do much more to publicize the website and it’s a resource for regionally and globally.

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Bandhu website remains a good source for knowledge and information regarding SOGI and SRHR.

Facebook is a place for fans and followers to have authentic conversations.

Posting a short message for anyone who follows Bandhu on Twitter.

Bandhu uploaded videos related to SOGI and SRHR for watch as a part of awareness build up among the gender divers population.

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Combatting Digital Vulnerabilities Through Digital Well-being and Awareness supported by CREA

Study on Monitoring and encouraging Diverse SOGIESC inclusion in the Humanitarian and DRR Sectors, a Joint study with UN-Women and Edge effect

Gender Base Violence (GBV) on Gender Diverse Population Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) of Gender Diverse Population supported by UNFPA

Baseline and Perception Study for Empowering left behind minority communities to effectively participate in the development process of Bangladesh’ project

All these study findings are used to develop further projects of Bandhu. For more detail please contact:
info@bandhu-bd.org

2021: SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF MEDIA BRIDGING

Bandhu always believes that it is through media that mass people can be reached most powerfully and effectively, and that mass awareness is the means to social inclusion. So Bandhu has a special focus on media. Bandhu has a Media Advisory committee comprising twelve renowned media gatekeepers, who took part in their first workshop to work out a media strategy for the organization. Bandhu has 90 media fellows across the country; it offers fellowship to journalists who are very much keen on working for the gender diverse communities. Last year, Bandhu conducted four media forum meetings in Barisal, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, and Khulna with a total of 46 participants. Bandhu arranged a central media consultation meeting on an online
platform. 65 fellow journalists joined the meeting. This was the first time in Bandhu’s history where all divisional journalists took part in an event and shared their views through group work for the wellbeing of this community.

In this year, a total of 70 articles/news were published on various themes in electronic and print media. These articles/news were focused on livelihood, rights, and social acceptance issues of the gender diverse population.

As a part of ‘16 Days of Activism’, Bandhu produced a series (five episodes) talk show named ‘Trans Talk’ based on the analysis of the recent policy brief titled ‘Gaps in Legal Protections Against Gender-based Violence for Transgender Persons in Bangladesh’. Starting early in the first week of December 2021, a separate subject relating to the GDP’s needs was discussed in each episode; the last episode of the series, which was about the human rights issues of the Transgender and Hijra community, was aired on the International Human Rights Day (10th December 2021).

Out of all these activities, more than 120 event-based news items have been published in different media publications. The approximate coverage of media publications is more than 1.5 million people. This larger population learned about the gender-diverse communities and was sensitized to their rights and acceptance issues.
Gender Academy: 
A Flagship Training in 
Gender and Sexuality

Gender and sexuality issues are still dealt with some secrecy and unease in Bangladesh as well as South Asia. There is very limited scope in Bangladesh to learn about gender and sexuality issues. Most of the time people think that sex and gender are the same thing, due to a lack of knowledge and misconceptions. Gender diverse people face cultural and social oppression, harassment and violence due to their gender and sexual identities.

Bandhu and Possibility, a platform for gender diverse women of Bandhu, initiated a flagship training course on the issues around human rights and health rights of the gender diverse population. The training in "Gender and Sexuality" is aimed at a comprehensive understanding and knowledge development about the gender, sexuality and diversity issues. This was the 5th gender academy training which saw the participation of 23 participants from different NGOs, INGOs, CBOs and the community. Six national and international facilitators facilitated the training.
Short Course on SRHR and Intersectionality by RFSU, Interactive Web-based Course: Intersectional Feminist Perspectives on SRHR

An interactive web-based course on intersectional feminist perspectives on SRHR was organized by RFSU for its partners, which served as a short introduction to intersectional power analysis, focusing on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. On behalf of Bandhu, Umme Farhana Zarif Kanta, Director of Policy, Advocacy and Human Rights, and AKM Mahbubul Islam Tanvir, Program Manager, participated in the training course. The purpose of the training was to introduce how SRHR may be understood and promoted based on an intersectional feminist power analysis. The participants have deepened their understanding of intersectional feminist perspectives on SRHR and strengthened their capacity to enrich both their internal work (e.g. organizational policies and strategies) and external work (e.g. planning, implementation, and project monitoring, policy advocacy) in light of an intersectional power analysis.

Evaluation of 4th SP and Development of 5th SF

During the reporting year, Bandhu has conducted the 4th SP evaluation which was carried out by a consultant. The main objectives of the evaluation are to assess the outcome indicator-wise results of the 4th SP, evaluate the major changes and identify all the findings for future recommendations of the 5th SP development. The consultant conducted the 4th SP evaluation by using mixed methods (both qualitative and quantitative). There was a purposive sampling method used for site selection and random sampling method used for data collection. The evaluation data collection was done through Bandhu MIS, IDI, KII, Case study, and FGD involving beneficiaries, key stakeholders, and program focal of Bandhu. After the draft report was prepared, Bandhu conducted a workshop with the management staff and collected their comments to validate the findings. The major recommendations of the evaluation are as below:

- Bandhu may rethink to re-organize the number of pillars for 5th strategic plan focusing on most important issues of GDPs such as Human rights, Primary Health Care (PHC) including existing HIV STI services, financial inclusion and livelihood opportunity, Social &

Organizational Development

Bandhu has always been concerned about the development, safety and security of its staff members. In order to maintain a disciplined work environment, different policies have been revised in 2021 and efforts are being made to maintain them. As a result of this, Bandhu revised its Safeguarding Policy, SHEA policy, and Code of Conduct. Apart from these policies, Bandhu also takes effective steps for its staff to participate in various training sessions, workshops and meetings to bring more dynamism to the development and cause of the workers. The efficiency of project implementation is being reflected in the experience Bandhu’s staff have gained through training.
Institutional acceptance including policy recognition and, Education and life skill development including vocational training opportunities.

Alongside the existing work with youth and adolescents, Bandhu may consider incorporating ICT issues as there are a wide range of opportunities nowadays in this sector for income generation as a part of sustainability (i.e., freelancing, IT-based in-house IGA activities).

To address vulnerabilities of GDPs, Bandhu may consider rolling out an action plan that simultaneously takes care of the advocacy agenda and SBCC (Social Behavioral Change Communication) issues, both at micro and macro levels. Under the 5th strategic plan, Bandhu needs to develop a number of documents around advocacy such as Advocacy Strategy and Implementation Plan, Advocacy Framework & Tools and Advocacy Stakeholder Analysis.

Needs to apply a “Life-Cycle Approach” (i.e., Health, Education, Adolescents, Livelihood, Financial inclusion, Mobilization, Shelter, Mental Health, Aging, etc.) of GDPs and accordingly design an advocacy strategy with respective line ministries and departments.

Focus on engagement with family members of GDPs to ensure their support for protection of GDP rights and promotion of justice and access to services for GDPs.

Extra focus on the youth and adolescents’ group because the majority of the GDP community face obstacles in their early age.

Based on the findings and recommendations of the 4th SP and other study assessments and community consultations, Bandhu has developed the 5th Strategic Framework (SF) with the support of external consultants. One international consultant and one national consultant have jointly worked to develop the Bandhu 5th SF. To develop the 5th SF, consultants have followed methods used in the 4th SP findings, consulted desk reviews (different studies, researches and assessments), attended meetings with Sr. management team of Bandhu, conducted consultation meetings with Bandhu staff (offline) and all DIC managers, conducted some KII, FGD through a structured questionnaire, interviewed international partners, organized online consultation with key stakeholders, donors, and UN partners, and gathered collective recommendations and feedback. Based on the above-mentioned methods, findings and recommendations, Bandhu has finalized the 5th SF for the next five years (2022-2026), which will be implemented between 2022-2026.
### Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu)

#### Statement of Financial Position

As on 31 December 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>Amount in Taka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>2,683,897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td>Intangible asset</td>
<td>2,781,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Advances, deposits and prepayments</td>
<td>2,425,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Investment in fixed deposit receipts</td>
<td>6,965,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Loans and receivables</td>
<td>1,669,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>87,489,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>104,015,967</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</th>
<th>Amount in Taka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Grant received in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Deferred income - property, plant and equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Liabilities for expenses - projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Provision and other liabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Loans and payables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employees welfare fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>104,015,967</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The annexed notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Anisul Islam Hero
Chairman

Shale Ahmed
Executive Director

Md. Shahidul Alam
Director Finance & Admin

Signed in terms of our separate report of even date annexed.

Dated: Dhaka
21 April 2022

S.F. Ahmed & Co.
Chartered Accountants
### Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu)

Statement of Income and Expenditure
For the year ended 31 December 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Amount in Taka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant income</td>
<td>170,461,963</td>
<td>168,476,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other donation income</td>
<td>28,154,732</td>
<td>7,956,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>7,301,226</td>
<td>6,777,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants in kind</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,781,760</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


#### EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project expenses</td>
<td>169,316,182</td>
<td>167,885,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and benefits</td>
<td>1,775,615</td>
<td>157,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program expenses</td>
<td>10,431,589</td>
<td>403,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative expenses</td>
<td>1,853,474</td>
<td>494,770</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>1,542,244</td>
<td>1,005,875</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


#### Excess/(Deficit) of income over expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excess/(Deficit) of income over expenditure</td>
<td>20,998,817</td>
<td>16,045,331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The annexed notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Signed in terms of our separate report of even date annexed.

Dated: Dhaka
21 April 2022

Anisul Islam Hero
Chairman

Shale Ahmed
Executive Director

Md. Shahidul Alam
Director Finance & Admin

S.F. Ahmed & Co.
Chartered Accountants
## Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu)
### Statement of Receipts and Payments
For the year ended 31 December 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Amount in Taka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening balances</td>
<td>48,479,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash in hand</td>
<td>37,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank</td>
<td>48,442,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation received for donor funded projects</td>
<td>203,626,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other donation received by core, net</td>
<td>29,923,910</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>7,344,236</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank interest</td>
<td>375,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare fund contribution</td>
<td>69,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-project payable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project closing amount</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance realized</td>
<td>931,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan received from core</td>
<td>10,064,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive against common pool</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable realized</td>
<td>186,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan realized</td>
<td>6,214,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td>258,736,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>307,216,234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PAYMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Amount in Taka</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payment of project expenses</td>
<td>164,872,662</td>
<td>165,717,688</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payment of salaries and benefits - core</td>
<td>1,775,615</td>
<td>260,465</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payment of program expenses - core</td>
<td>7,415,752</td>
<td>549,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payment of administrative expenses</td>
<td>1,851,255</td>
<td>789,535</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fund refund to the donor</td>
<td>1,127,952</td>
<td>558,772</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Payment for capital expenditure</td>
<td>3,056,542</td>
<td>449,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advances, deposits and prepayments</td>
<td>2,425,714</td>
<td>2,714,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loan paid to projects</td>
<td>339,095</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Payment against accounts payable</td>
<td>2,662,618</td>
<td>2,606,839</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Investment in FDR</td>
<td>154,552</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payment against common pool</td>
<td>1,523,953</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital fund adjustment</td>
<td>138,845</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project close amount</td>
<td>347,753</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payment against project payable</td>
<td>7,912,656</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transfer to core by project</td>
<td>9,465,390</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loan repayment to core by project</td>
<td>14,656,674</td>
<td>2,241,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>219,727,029</td>
<td>175,889,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing balances</td>
<td>87,489,204</td>
<td>48,479,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash in hand</td>
<td>37,162</td>
<td>37,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash at bank</td>
<td>87,452,042</td>
<td>48,442,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>307,216,234</td>
<td>224,368,464</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Anisul Islam Hero
Chairman

Shale Ahmed
Executive Director

Md. Shahidul Alam
Director Finance & Admin

Dated; Dhaka
21 April 2022
Annual general meeting of Bandhu, 2021