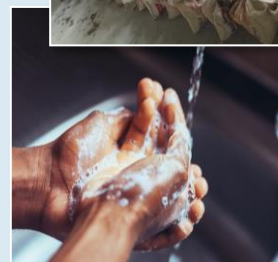




Dr. Shamim Ferdous
Executive Director

Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation
Director, South Asia,
Workability Asia



Response to the COVID19 in Bangladesh



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Academics develop sign language translation of Coronavirus screening questions in Malaysia



COVID 19 disaster in India and how SINAM NGO responded to the community needs

Response to the COVID19 in Bangladesh



Dr. Shamim Ferdous
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Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with an estimated population of 164,689,383 people (UN data). Our Government has taken multiple strategies to the spread of COVID 19 and declared the countrywide lockdown from 26th March to 30th May 2020 which was one of the key steps. It impacted on the income generating activities especially for small business and the garments sectors. During the lockdown Govt and non-govt. organizations gave emphasis on the following four issues.

- Health
- Nutrition
- Education
- Rights and protection



Health: There was no preparedness in the Bangladeshi health system despite the 2-month period since Covid-19 began spreading in Asia. The Govt. took immediate measure to save our people---wear masks, wash your hands and maintain social distance and prepare isolation units, ventilators and ICU beds for corona. Now the situation has improved, test kits are available around the country.

Food:. The Bangladeshi economy is being significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to a decline in national and global demand for manufactured goods, particularly in the garment sector. Under lockdown for two months, people in the lower income groups have been the most affected by the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdown. Govt. declared financial packages in different sectors to overcome the economic crisis.

However, in Bangladesh, where a significant proportion of the total population lives hand to mouth, lockdown is not a feasible idea. Government may think about starting a "hygienic" rationing system in case of locking down for a more extended period.





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Education:

Bangladesh achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education in 2018 while its literacy rate jumped from 53.7 per cent in 2006 to 73.9 per cent in 2018.

Online Education and Bangladesh Television Plan COVID19 period-2020: As the students come from different classes and from different areas of society, they don't have the opportunity of net/online services. But most of them have at least one phone at home. In some cases the phone stays with the working father and he comes back home from work at night. So, only during emergencies is communication possible.



Rights and Protection:

KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SEXUAL NEGLECT, ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION DURING THE COVID19 LOCKDOWN IN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh, as a lower-middle-income country, besides limitations in restricting the spread of the virus, the country has to expand its testing and healthcare facilities. It has to ensure a constant supply of PPE for healthcare workers. Above all, improvised and timely measures taken with proper coordination may help the country to fight the lethal virus. During the lockdown period, the Bangladesh Govt. and other Non-Govt. organizations also overcame the food crises by providing relief and also tried to maintain education of our children. The Government will not be able to mitigate the situation alone; individual efforts from citizens, direct involvement of the nation's experts, and international help are urgently needed. As the situation intensifies, the world is closely watching how Bangladesh will navigate this crisis.

COVID 19 disaster in India and how SINAM NGO responded to the community's needs

The Physically Challenged people in Tiruvannamalai district was affected much due to the lockdown from March to November 30th 2020. They lost their employment, livelihood options and lost their social support due to isolation and alleviation from the society.

SINAM has helped 275 The Physically Challenged people poor people who were living in poverty / hunger and starvation. These people were given Rice, Sugar Cooking items, provisions and Face masks worth of Rs.1000 per individual. These beneficiaries one from Thandrapet block of Tiruvannamalai district.



Distribution of dry rations_SINAM



SINAM has been working with around 5326 people with disabilities in four blocks of Tiruvannamalai Thandrapet block, Kalasapakkam block, Thuringapuram block and Venpakkam. In each block there were 15 trained Volunteers who are helping them in different ways possible like taking to hospitals, Government offices etc., These volunteers are locally available in the block itself. Out of 5326 people with disabilities, they selected 20 most Vulnerable people with disabilities, and they provided the personal protective equipment like Face masks, Hand Sanitizers, Hand gloves & hand washing Soaps. Altogether 275 beneficiaries (15 Volunteers X 20 persons with disabilities X 4 blocks) were visited with personal protective equipment and shared the methods to prevent the incidence of COVID 19 and controlling mechanism through taking affordable treatment.

The government has recommended Sidha Treatment (Herbal) Homeopathy and Allopathic Treatment; Allopathic treatment is costlier than Sidha and homeopathy. People can prepare Sidha Treatment at home like Kabasura Kudineer (made out of 14 herbal plants) which is less cost wise.

Academics develop sign language translations of Coronavirus screening questions in Malaysia

Academics from Monash University Malaysia have developed sign language translations of Coronavirus screening questions after being inspired by the story of a COVID infected patient with a hearing disability.

Uma Devi Palanisamy, an associate professor, researchers and students translated the Coronavirus screening questions into Malaysian Sign Language.



She said the Coronavirus screening process could be a daunting affair for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, as many of them lack accessible healthcare information due to communication barriers.

"The Coronavirus screening process may be isolating and intimidating for patients with hearing disabilities as they lack accessible Covid-19 healthcare information.

"Hence, this free-resource tool will ensure that these individuals have equitable access to Covid-19 screening measures in a meaningful and timely manner."

The translations, which cover symptoms, travel history, prior participation in large gatherings, and contact tracing, are available as a free-resource tool on Monash University Malaysia's website.

The project was part of the university HEARD (Healthcare needs of the Deaf) programme, aiming to improve communication between healthcare personnel and individuals with hearing disabilities.

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

From : <https://disabilityinsider.com/2020/11/18/covid/academics-develop-sign-language-translations-of-coronavirus-screening-questions-in-malaysia/>

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Sharing Session between KYOSAREN and The Redemptorist Foundation for PWDs

Kyosaren Committee for International issue held “Session on sharing the situation of PWDs during the COVID-19 pandemic in Japan and Thailand” with Redemptorist Foundation for PWDs on Nov. 18 via Zoom.

This session had 2 purposes, one is to follow the Exchange program 2015 between Kyosaren and Redemptorist, and the other is to exchange both country’s situation of PWDs during the pandemic.

The Exchange program started with one staff comment from Redemptorist at WAsia workshop held at Tahanang Walang Hagdanan Inc. in Philippines in 2013, which was “we started to support persons with intellectual disabilities, but we would like to learn how to support them in Japan”. Then 3 staff from Redemptorist stayed in Japan for 2 weeks in 2015 and visited many places, like Tokyo Vocational Center for PWDs, Special-needs School, workshops and companies who hired PWDs and so on.

We learned Thai government took strict measures like lock down and curfew, and contained the spread of COVID-19 at that time, although I heard a big cluster had happened among migrant workers from Myanmar a few days ago. The government also provided special funds for PWDs, 1,000 per month for 3 months. But the fund was paid by bank account, some severe PWDs were not able to go a bank to open their accounts to receive the funds.

We learned there was a similar situation for PWDs in Japan and Thailand. Finally, we promised to keep our friendship and meet again after corona.



Disabilities welfares in Thailand

- ❑ Pension 800 BHTs (2,704 ¥)
- ❑ Loan for career (PWDs or Care taker) without interest within 5 years 60,000 BHT (202,816 ¥)
- ❑ Equipment aid for Disabilities such as wheelchair, Hearing aid, Prosthetic and etc.
- ❑ Quota 100 : 1 for disabilities employment.
- ❑ Medical treatment from government hospital.



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and Secretariat Team of WAsia



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From Secretariat Team

The Board Meeting was held on Zoom application from 12.00-14.00 pm on November 17th, 2020 with the attendances of all 7 board of directors, 2 advisors, 3 secretariats and 2 observers.

The BOD decided there are 3 applications which were not approved because the proposal didn't support employment for persons with disabilities and 7 applications were approved and information will be reviewed by three board members. And then we would appoint the sub-committee to review the applications again and propose to the BOD for the last decision by the end of 2020 and make an announcement in January 2021.

The BOD discussed on the agendas such as WAsia membership and finance. They mostly focused on the WAsia and WI conference 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic that would be held in Pattaya, Thailand. Finally, they decided to hold an extra-meeting in January 2021 for the final decision about holding the WAsia and WI Conference 2021.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Zoom application from 12.00-14.30 pm on November 26th, 2020 with 25 attendances of organizations around Asia.

They discussed and shared about working under the pandemic crisis as how to help persons with disabilities to have a better quality of life and how to promote the employment of persons with disabilities under this difficult time. WAsia appreciates the need to help the members who have a negative financial impact. Please request to be exempt or discount the membership fee by contact to the Secretariat office as the email below.

Workability Asia Newsletter would like to invite you to :

- Share your relevant information, knowledge or experiences with WAsia members and our network.
 - Send your articles (1-2 pages) with some photos.
 - Send your stories to WAsia Secretariat Team
- to be part of the next newsletter **by February 15, 2021.**

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