



**taungya**

# Taungya E-Bulletin

*A Bi-Monthly News Letter of Taungya*

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## Editorial Message:

After the last publication of Volume-3; Issue-3 of 2018 it was difficult for Taungya to continue publication of the E-bulletin for some unavoidable situation as the website went down for a considerable time. But good thing is that Taungya is always committed to its positive actions and maintain the path of facilitating role to make bridge of its works and the people and the society that need to be respectfully apprised of. The past few years Taungya was dim due to technical limitation but envisage to be enlighten again with the hope of change and commitment. We are really happy to publish our first and last volume of 7 and issue- 6 of 2022 and we are very much hopeful to continue it now on. Efforts to make the *Bulletin* even more visible and useful are in progress. It is a matter of sorrow that we could not include any new writings from our organization members in this issue too. However, we will continue the effort to enrich our publication by involving more researchers or writers from our honorable GB members and other NGOs too in CHT. So, those who are interested please contact with us.

Taungya wishes **MERRY CHRISTMAS 2022 & HAPPY NEW YEAR 2023!** to all its readers, well wishers and followers.

## Programme Progress Sharing Meeting and Adolescent Fair 2022 Held

On the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 a half daylong multi-stakeholder meeting under the title “**Programme Progress Sharing Meeting and Adolescent Fair 2022**” was held at the Khudra Nrihostir Cultural Institute in Rangamati District. The event was organized by OLHF team of Rangamati Cluster (Progressive, Taungya, Hill Flower and WEAVE). It was arranged in three parts- inauguration of the fair by the chief guest, meeting with progress sharing with the stakeholders and cultural program by the adolescent girls of the project Girls’ Clubs. After the inauguration of the fair the meeting starts in the auditorium of KNCI. The meeting was presided over by Sanjoy Mazumder, Project Manager of BNPS. Mr. Aungsuiprue Chowdhury, honorable Chairman, RHDC was present as chief guest in the meeting along with other special guests that are representatives from Police Super Office, DDFP, DDSS, DD of youth development, District Civil Surgeon of Rangamati, CHT Headman Association. The meeting was facilitated by Rimi Chakma, Master Trainer, BNPS, Rangamati Cluster and Hilari Tripura, Unit Manager, Hill Flower. Welcome speech was delivered by Executive Director, Progressive, the Lead NGO of Rangamati Cluster and Project Coordinator; Sukanta Chakma



Photo: Honorable Chairman, Mr. Aungsuiprue Chowdhury talks about admirable contribution of NGOs in CHT



Photo: Taungya Team in the stall of Youth and Adolescent Fair 2022 arranged at premises of KNCI, Rangamati



Photo: Girls Club member of Taungya perform a stage play on Demerits of early marriage at Auditorium, of KNCI, Rangamati

represents project progress, achievement, challenges and learning through power point presentation. Then Begum Shahanwaz, Deputy Director of Family Planning and Dr. Binod Shekhar Chakma, Deputy Civil Surgeon, of Rangamati delivers their speech and admires project activities and talks about necessity of more such projects in CHT. The chief guest, Mr. Angsuiprue Chowdhury, Chairman of RHDC, talks about the importance of the project in CHT context. He says “*For not being aware of health and education, we are going backward day by day. On the contrary, NGOs are working regarding the issues very smoothly. This project is creating much awareness in our society on this issue, which is highly appreciable. Although there are no visible results in this project, I think through the awareness sessions of the project they are playing a major role for making a radical change in the lives of the community and the girls’ club members.*”

On the occasion of the meeting a colorful Youth and Adolescent Fair was arranged in the premises of the KNCI ground by the four CSOs of the project and participants with the representatives of project Girls’ Clubs members from different upazila. Creative projects of crafts, homemade re-usable sanitary pads, demo plots of Girls’ Clubs and project information on MHM, SRHR etc. were demonstrated by the stalls of the participants.

Adolescent girls vividly perform some of their creative projects in the form of street plays, card presentation besides enchanting stage dance performance in the cultural program of the meeting. Taungya girls’ team performs a street play on reducing early marriage. It represents the demerit of early marriage and information of GoB emergency helpline support through 999 and 109. Through their stage play the girls also give a message that

*“Girl that will get married early; she will face maternal mortality”*

## Annual Planning Workshop 2022 held at Motel Saikat, Chattogram

Annual Planning Workshop of OLHF project was held from 21st November to 23rd November at Motel Shaikat. It is a regular activity of the project. Taungya OLHF project team PC Kuldip Roy, PocT Mithila Roy, PMEOD Dhana Bikash Chakma and Executive Director, Pranajit Dewan attended the workshop along with other teams of rest 9 CSOs namely- Progressive, Taungya, Hill Flower, WEAVE, Zabarang, Trinamul Unnayan Songstha, KMKS, Annanya Kallyan Songstha, GRAUS and Tahzindgdong that implementing the project in CHT. The workshop was arranged by Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha and Simavi, Netherlands. Project Manager, Sanjoy Majumder; Capacity Building Coordinator, Nasrin Begum with other personnel of OLHF project from BNPS part and Program Manager Mahbuba Haque Kumkum; MEAL Officer, Tuhin Sarker were present as facilitator of the workshop.

## Annual General Meeting of Taungya held after a Gap for COVID 19 Pandemic Situation

On the 29 December 2022, Annual General Meeting of Taungya Governing Council held at Taungya Head Office, Rajbari Road, Rangamati. The meeting was arranged after a year break in 2021 since the COVID 19 pandemic situation all over the country. The meeting was presided over by honorable chairperson of Taungya, Raja Devasish Roy and Md. Abdur Rashid, Upazila Social Service Officer, Rangamati Sadar Upazila were present as chief guest and as representative of the Social Service Department, Rangamati. On the other hand Mr. Goutam Dewan, member of Taungya Advisory Panel also participates in the meeting. The meeting was divided into two parts- review and discussion session and after it cultural program along with dinner party with guests and family members of Taungya. The meeting was moderated by honorable Secretary, Dr. Parash Khisa. He also represents the annual report of the organization and Treasurer, Taungya, Mr. Rajib Chakma represents the annual financial report of 2021 & 2022. Newly recruited Executive Director, Pranajit Dewan also demonstrates a power point presentation on Taungya, its recent works, achievements and ongoing activities before the members.



Secretary of Taungya, Dr. Parash Khisa, moderates and represents annual report of Taungya in the AGM 2022

The chief guest, Md. Abdur Rashid, in his speech express satisfaction on activities of Taungya and wishes other NGOs should initiate more development works in the remote corners like Taungya as the peoples in those areas always remain deprived from education, sanitation, health facilities properly.

During discussion on present situation of the completed education projects general member, Pritam Chakma informs that most of the schools out of 50 could not completed nationalization process and condition of the schools are not going well or lack of support. The members emphasizes on to initiate and look for new projects or program intervention on as many schools as possible.

At the end of the meeting the chairperson deliver his speech and express thanks to all the members for their volunteer support for the organization and participating in the meeting.

During the workshop the project team or consortium discusses on advocacy plan, Health Service Provider/ Gender Focal Person Training, creative projects of girls clubs, most significant change stories, community sessions, WASH in schools, data collection methods and visibility and advocacy activities as per upcoming 2023 plan.

Two talk shows were also arranged in the workshop. One with the PCs of 10 CSOs on activities of 2023 moderated by Sanjoy Majumder and the other with Project Officers of 10 CSOs on creative project of the Girls’ Clubs of the project.

He event was a significant event of the project as it is where the OLHF project team members share the activities progress of the year, challenge and learning along with preparation of a strategic implementation plan for the remaining last year (2023) of the project.

After the three days long workshop the Network for Adolescent Rights Initiatives-NARI meeting was arranged as its routine task and all the 10 CSOs participate in the meeting lead by the respective EDs or representatives. The NARI is a newly formed network of the 10 CSOs to work for rights based approach for the adolescents in CHT. It is the first network in CHT that will work on adolescent in CHT. 10 CSOs has already drafted the constitution for the NARI network and with a vision of contributing to change the context of adolescent issues in the lance of SRHR, MHM and GBV with respect to appreciable customary system of 11 indigenous communities in CHT.



Upazila Social Service Officer of Rangamati Sadar Upazila, Md. Abdur Rashid thanks Taungya for its work in the remote corner of CHT in the AGM



Honorable chairperson, Raja Devasish Roy emphasizes on education project and programs besides working on gender and climate issue



## CASE STUDY

### CASE 1: Menstrual Health Management a New Step Towards a Sensitized Society

My name is Shiuli (pseudonym). I read in class IX. I live in village since I was born. My father is a farmer. He is the only income generating person in our family so, our family live on agriculture.

Like most of the other villagers I have been deprived of proper education and health service due to lack of financial solvency in our family and as there is no health service centre in or near our village. So, there are many village adolescent girls and women that cannot have proper guidelines for menstrual health management at home and treatment for sexual disease or carnal problems that's nobody openly talks about. I also had no scientific and any idea of period or menstruation and properly take care of it of my own. When first I experienced period I was scared like most of the girls and used old cloths. Sometime I also used sanitary pad but I had no idea for time of its uses duration. I used pad and cloths even a day long before learning about it properly. Sometime I would had pain in the abdomen and urinary bladder and I could not go school for 2 to 3 days even more could not play with friends in the fields and my temper would become too tetchy that I would misbehave with everyone in the family. I had to suffer a lot as I could not tell and share about it with anyone due to hesitation, shame and fear.

In the early 2020 a survey was conducted by a local NGO named Taungya for establishing a Girls' Club in our village. The field staff of Taungya collects a list of 40 adolescent girls and young women from our village. I was also become enlisted and later in October of the same year I participate in the first session of the club. A young woman from our village was also selected as *Mentor* that will support to run the club. Then I become a regular member of our club and get involved with the project called Our Lives Our Health Our Futures. I participate in all the sessions facilitated by our Mentor whom we call Mentor didi. One day she takes a session on menstrual health management and like the other entire members I learn many untold things about it. I learn that as per natural and normal physical change, each and every normal girl has period in a periodical time of a month. I also came to know that in our country, period of a girl normally starts from the age of 9 to 12 years. We should not use one pad more than six hours and if we use cloth it must be washed with soap, clean water and dry it in the direct sunlight before reusing it. But due to unawareness, ignorance, fear, shame and off course taboo against it in our society almost all the girls and women suffer from mental and physical problem profoundly that becomes risky for their psycho-physical life. Socially established taboo like- during period a woman/girl should not climb a tree, go to the pagoda and agricultural fields etc. obsessions make bar for a girl to grow up normally, independently and free power of thinking and potentiality.

After my learning on menstrual management I have started to use sanitary pad not more than 6 hours and if I have to use cloth, I wash it with soap and clean water and then dry it in the direct sun light before reusing it. Sometime we share our experiences in the club and I came to know that all our members have started practicing it. I hope this practice and menstrual management will keep our members hale and hearty. All the girls are very glad to learn such life skill knowledge from the club which we did not have had from our family or schools. I believe that like myself, many of our club members started understanding our wrong and bad ideas on many issues like it and we try to attend club sessions regularly besides our regular duties at home and for our study only for the benefit to enrich our knowledge about ourselves and properly build us for the future. I particularly loved another initiative of the project that our Mentor didi and some senior project staff also discusses about menstrual management with our mothers, fathers and brothers separately to sensitize them on it which made it easy for us at our respective homes for practicing it. But it is true that the taboo against this natural and normal physical and dignified characteristic of a woman life will take some time to remove from deeply rooted belief of our society.

### Case Study-2: Domestic Violence Against Woman

Divorcee Juni (pseudonym) is mother of a child. She is the second of four children of her parents. Her father is a jum cultivator and mother is a house wife.

Juni could study only in class VIII as her poor jum cultivator father could not provide support for further education. Her family arranges her marriage with a son of a solvent family in another village when she was only 15 years old adolescent girl. After her marriage she found a family of her husband with father & mother in law, two sisters of her mother in law and two younger sisters of her husband. Her husband is a businessman which is their family source of income. So, often he has to travel different places for business purpose. Her husband would take care and communicate with her regularly when he stays out of home for his business and Juni would carefully manage and take care of her father & mother in law as if they would not have any problem. It was indeed a great challenge and painful to look after for four of them (including two sisters of her mother in law). Time passes on and Juni becomes pregnant after a year and when her husband would not at home, all the family members would take care of her. She had a happy family whatsoever but it did not last long. After two months of her pregnancy she notices some absurd changes in her husband. He would no longer care of her and would not talk with her in normal expectation and manner. If she would plea something to have, he would not care and gave importance of that. For this change of her husband, Juni was silently becoming helpless and mentally agitated day by day. She could not talk about it with anyone too. One day she tells about it to her father and mother in law but they also could not give her any better answer.

At this time, one day she hears the heart breaking information from a distant-relative, an elder sister that lives besides their village that her husband is in illegal relationship with another girl of their village. Hearing the news she felt as if the sky had collapsed on her. She asks her husband about the rumor but he becomes very angry and diatribes and physically tortures her. She then informs about it to her mother and father in laws but they also remain silent too. Such situation makes her mentally break down and tremendously frustrated. She finds no solution for it. Husband and wife starts quarrel regularly and her husband continues beating and mentally torture her. In such situation her husband creates mental pressure on her for divorce. But Juni remains quiet and silently endures the torture as her father is a helpless poor jumia and she had no income to live. As there was no solution she could find, one day she informs of it to some elders of the village and seeks justice from them and meanwhile she returns to her father's home with her child. She could not but return as she complaint against her husband and wanted justice from the village elders. After few days later a customary court was arranged by the elders of the two villages. But as her husband was influential the verdict goes against her. The result of the justice increases mental pressure on her and her family by her husband and he continues forcing for divorce.

Juni becomes a member of Ludibas Sora Girls' Club in 2021. Whatever the situation is, she participates the awareness sessions regularly. She finds each session to be very encouraging for her. The motivational and sensitization sessions inspire her to live as a human being not like a doll or slave for someone. Though she was forced to married early, she accepts her destiny and becomes motivated to live on and move forward as life brings forward. Such situation made her to take firm decision that whatever society responses it does not matter anymore but she must live on of her own and she agrees and consent to divorce her husband in 2021. She starts her education newly again for the time being. She gets herself admitted in class nine in the Open University and sets a tailors shop at upazila sadar.

Juni is now free from insult, torture and mental pressure and living happily with her child. Thinking of completing her education and future of her child, she continues looking for better ways to move forward with the support of her parents and inspiration and life skill knowledge from the project's Girls' Club.

### Training for the Health Service Providers held in Rangamati District

Taungya arranged a three days long Health Service Provider Training from 6th to 8th November 2022 at Ashika Conference Hall, Rangamati Hill District. The Training was inaugurated by Dr. Arabindu Chakma UH&FPO of Bagheisori upazila. ED (In charge) Dr. Parash Khisa was also present in the opening of the training. Project Coordinator Kuldip Roy gave a power point presentation based on the project activities for the participants. The 15 participants were from three working area upazila of Taungya and there were --- SACMO 3, CHCP 8, FWV-3, FWA-1. The facilitators and resource person for the training were-- Dr. Arabindu Chakma UH&FPO of Bagheisori upazila, Dr. Mong Khew Thin UH&FPO of Borkol upazila, Dr. Shuvro Palit MoMCH of Bileisori upazila, Dr. Robin Bhattacharjee MoMCH of Bagheisori upazila, Satish Shankar Chakma UFPO of Borkol Upazila, Adv. Ms. Susmita Chakma. Besides them, Master Trainer of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha Rimi Chakam, Program Officer cum Trainer Mithila Roy and Project Coordinator Kuldip Roy. All the facilitators spoke about the importance of adolescent health and their pivotal role in the near future for our country. Deputy Directo Family Planning Ms. Begum Shahan Waz was present in the closing ceremony of the training along with Executive Director (In charge) Dr. Parash Khisa and Adv. Ms. Susmita Chakma. The training was based on GoB published Adolescent Friendly Health Service training module which was published at 2019. We hope that after this training the participants will be able to provide adolescent friendly health service more effectively to the adolescents of our working area upazilla of Barkal, Biaichori and Baghaichori.

### Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Conference Held for the First Time in Chattogram

The first time SRHR conference under OLHF project was held at Chattogram Shilpokola Academy from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 where 10 civil society organizations of the project in CHT participated with their project staff, Mentor and selected members of the Girls' Clubs'. It was arranged by BNPS. Colorful rally, stalls, stage performance, showcasing creative projects like-short plays, card presentation, songs, discussion session, etc. were demonstrated in the conference. The objectives of the event was to aware the society about the issues on SRHR, MHM and GBV related issues, roles & services of the relevant actors of all sectors of GoB and non-GoB towards the disregarded adolescent and young women in our society and information sharing of project progress.

The conference starts with singing the national anthem and flying balloons and festoons of messages of the conference. Then the rally with banner was arranged and from the Shilpokola yard to the main road which consists of participants from all CSOs and guests. The indoor programs starts with online inauguration speech of Rokeya Kabir, Executive Director, BNPS. Liaison Officer Mr. Shorif Chowhan moderated the meeting and project brief was presented by Project Manager, Sanjoy Majumder. Shamsul Alam Chowdhury Whip and member of the parliament was present as Chief Guest of the conference.

On the first day adolescent health and Tribal Health Plan and the second day menstrual health management followed by another topic of gender based violence discussion sessions were arranged in the program. Among the discussants, Sakhawat Ullah, Divisional Director of Health Department of Chattogram; Professor Mostafa Kamal Jatra, Chittagong University Theater Department; Dr. Mohammad Saber, Civil Surgeon of Hagratori District; Aung Cha Lu, Deputy Director Family Planning of Bandarban and many were present in the conference. Besides the EDs of 10 CSOs also participate in discussion sessions with the gusts.

Stage showcasing and messages through creative projects like- short plays, card presentation etc. on issues of early marriage, MHM and GBV attracts attention of the audience and dances of different indigenous communities by the Girls' Clubs' members enchanted the conference attenders.

The second and closing ceremony was chaired by Deputy Executive Director Ms. Shahnaz Shumi from BNPS. Participants wishes for the adolescents in the country and abolition of all bad practice, customs and beliefs against SRHR and MHM of the women in the world.