



taungya

Taungya E-Bulletin

A Bi-Monthly News Letter of Taungya

Publication Committee:

- Raja Devasish Roy
- Nirupa Dewan
- Dr. Parash Khisa
- Amlan Chakma

Inside the Issue:

- Editorial Message
- Development Activities and case study
- Publication information
- Editorial Board

Editorial Message:

We are thrilled to announce the release of our latest publication, Volume 8, Issue 2. As we enter the months of celebration for Independence Day in Bangladesh, as well as Biju, Bishu, Boishuk, Bihu, Sanghrai and the Bengali New Year 1430, we extend a warm welcome to our readers. Our team has worked tirelessly to curate a collection of articles that showcase the latest research and insights in our field. We hope that this volume will provide valuable information and inspiration to our readers, and contribute to the ongoing discourse in our industry.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to sharing more exciting developments with you in the future.

Project News

The Executive Director of BRAC conducted a site visit to a primary school led by the community in Bileisori Upazila

On April 17, 2023, the Gaskaba Sora non-government Primary School received a visit from a team of esteemed individuals from BRAC, led by Asif Saleh, the honorable Executive Director, BRAC. The team included Safi Rahman Khan, Director of Education, Skills Development, and Migration at BRAC; Raj Kishor Roy, Divisional Manager of Education; Aatur Rahman, BRAC; Rangamati Area Manager, Puspita Chakma and Habibur Rahman, BRAC. The visit was made possible by Taungya and Dr. Parash Khisa, Secretary of Taungya, Rajib Chakma, Treasurer, Manabashish Chakma, Governing Body Member and Pranajit Dewan, ED of Taungya, who all attended the field visit. The visit was particularly special as it was graced by the presence of the Rani Yan Yan, the honorable Advisor of honorable Chakma Raja and chairperson of Taungya, Barrister Devasish Roy joined the team to observe the situation of the school and the community.



Photo: Honorable Executive Director, Mr. Asif Saleh was warmly welcomed by the community people

The Gaskaba Sora School is located in Bileisori Upazila between the border of Kutubdia and Barudgola Mauza. It is one of the 43 community schools that Taungya supported under the "Integrated Support to Promote Primary Education in Remote Areas of Rangamati Hill Tracts"- ISPPERARHT Project, which was funded by the Manusher Jonno Foundation and phased out after 2019.



Photo: Meeting between the Taungya team and BRAC officials at Taungya Conference hall

Anyway, the school goes and villagers warmly received the visitors and in the non-formal meeting the team discussed about the schooling and the role of the community, teacher and local leaders during the open discussion session. Villagers shared about the crisis of drinking water, livelihood limitation and primary health service situation during the meeting.

After the visit, on 18 April 2023, the team also visited Taungya Head Office and discussed on various development initiatives undertaken by Taungya. Representatives of Taungya shared experience of project implementation challenges, and monitoring strategies in the remote corners of CHT. Taungya governing Body member Mr. Rupak Khisa, Ms. Anjulika Khisa also attended the meeting with Secretary Dr. Parash Khisa and Treasurer Rajib Chakma along with Taungya senior staff members.

Psychological Support Training on SRHR and GBV were organized for POCT and PF at CCDB Hope Foundation, Savar, Dhaka

From 13th March to 15th March 2023, a 3-day Facilitation and Psychological Support Training on SRHR and GBV were organized by BNPS at CCDB Hope Foundation Centre. The POCT and 3 PFs of Taungya participated in the training event along with the other 09 POCTs and 26 PFs of the rest 09 CSOs and 03 MTs from three hill districts. The training program was specially organized for POCTs and PFs in order to enrich their knowledge and skills on facilitation, SRHR, and GBV issues. Needless to say, the POCTs and PFs are the main focal educators of the mentors and the members of the girl's club for educating them in MHM, SRHR, GBV, etc. which is why the training was very important for their capacity-building.



Picture: A session is going on by the MT with the Participants

The 3-day training event was inaugurated by the Program Manager of BNPS, Mr. Sanjoy Majumder, facilitated by Ms. Nasrin Begum, Capacity Building Coordinator of BNPS, and co-facilitated by the POCTs of respective CSOs. periodically. The training event was divided into many sessions, role plays, discussions and group works where the POCT and PFs of Taungya actively participated and it helped them to enrich their knowledge on many issues. The POCT of Taungya Ms. Mithila Roy shared her views in this regard, "The training event was really helpful for me to enrich my knowledge on SRHR and GBV. Earlier, I haven't much ideas about the Psychosocial problems of Society. Now I have a clear idea of it and I can transfer my knowledge to the Girls Club Mentors and members. Besides, the training has improved my confidence and facilitation skill."



Picture: PF of Barkal, Ms. Soma Chakma is discussing about Sexuality with the participants

Moreover, in the training event, Creative project showcasing and Commitment taking, Community session challenges, Gender equality and equity, Gender sensitivity, Gender Discrimination, Dealing with sensitive issues etc. are discussed thoroughly with the participants. On the last day, a mock test was performed by each CSO and PM and MTs of three hill districts commented their feedbacks on that. Lastly, it is mentionable to say that, the extensive 3 day event was great learning event for POCTs and PFs of the respective CSOs.

Taungya Observed "World Health Day 2023" at Barkal Upazila

On 6th April 2023, the Lobby and Advocacy officer of the OLHF-Taungya project visited Ludibas Sora Girls Club, Barkal to celebrate World Health Day 2023. The objective of the event was to have an open discussion with the girls of the girls' club, the traditional leader, the Father, and the mother group on adolescent health management. At first, the LAO had his opening speech and pointed out the project activities and goals. Then he initially discussed the importance of adolescent health management and the role of community leaders and father and mother groups in ensuring the adolescent's health rights.

The Woman Karbari Malaching Marma then had a brief speech where she assured the community people to play her leadership role in ensuring women and adolescent rights especially she committed to play a vital role in preventing early marriage in the community. A member of the girls' club also gave a speech where she thanked Taungya and OLHF project to initiate a such project for them and they are really happy to learn about MHM, SRSR, etc. beside their studies.



Photo: LAO, Taungya, is discussing with community people regarding Adolescent Health Management

CASE STUDY

A Tale of a Sensitized Father on Menstrual Health Management in Extreme Remote areas of Bilaisori Upazila

45 years old farmer Shanti Bikash Chakma (pseudonym) lives with his family in a remote area of Egujyasori village, Farua Union, Bileishori Upazila. He could not study much and can only give signature. His wife also help him in farming besides looking after all the household jobs. They have two daughters one is 15 years and the other one is 11 years old that studies successively in class VIII and IV the local schools.

The eldest daughter often gets absent for 5 to 6 times in a month at school due to stomach pain. At first, they thought that was normal and they did not worry that much. His wife were aware of the problem but never discussed much with him. The both daughters are members of the Egujyasori Girls Club with other girls from their village which is run by a Mentor with the technical support of the OLHF Project team of Taungya. They regularly join in the various sessions of the club. According to the project objectives Shanti Bikash Chakma also get the opportunity to join in meetings and sessions of the club on regular basis. In one such session, he got chance to learn about the “Menstrual Health Management” of women where he learns more about menstruation that is a normal process for a woman and it occurs on a periodic time basis and it is very essential to stay neat and clean, and eat healthy food during period. Besides, he also learns that stomach pain is a normal thing during period but sometimes the pain may get extreme and excessive bleeding may occur. If this kind of unusual situation occurs, it is necessary to contact the nearest health clinic and consult with the medical officer.

After learning all of this information about menstruation, he realized that his eldest daughter also may get serious health issues if her stomach pain gets severe day by day. So, he discussed with his wife regarding this and I asked his eldest daughter about her condition. His eldest daughter says “Yes, Father I feel extreme pain sometimes in my stomach during my period. That is why, I get absent at school often” After hearing his daughter’s statement, he immediately took her to their union health clinic center and consulted with the medical assistant about her condition. All these years, he learned that the period is a private thing for women and this is not necessary to discuss it with men, the clothes of menstruation need to get dry privately, if a man touches a woman’s menstruation clothes he gets unlucky etc. But doing the menstruation session in the girls’ club he realized that these beliefs and learnings are all wrong and merely superstition. So, after consulting with the medical assistant, he takes necessary medicines for his eldest daughter from the clinic and started providing medicine to his daughter as per the advice. He also purchases healthy and nutritious food also for his daughter from local market. After a few days, his daughter’s stomach pain gets normal and she started feeling good about her health.

“This was a great experience with my eldest daughter and I have learned a lot of new things regarding the menstruation of a woman. I love my two daughters very much. So now, during their period, I bought healthy foods for them, motivate them to stay neat and clean, don’t permit them to do heavy household work, etc. I did not get the opportunity to study when I was very young. But I want my daughter to be well-educated and have a good and prosperous life in the future. So, I encourage them to study well and advise them to share with me if any physical difficulties arise. I learned a lot of things after joining the “Menstrual Health Management” session and my ideas about menstruation have been changing. I am grateful to the OLHF-Taungya project for providing such session and learning to us.” Says Shanti Bikash Chakma.

“There are some fathers and brothers that were not positive to attend Girls’ Club session at the beginning. But when they started to realize the practical utility and importance of the session topic that the project offers they all become responsive. But still most of them feel shy as it is a taboo in the society to openly discuss about menstruation, sex and sexual health.” Says Mentor of the Egujyasori Girls Club.

I am the only male PF of the project working with Taungya. It was also difficult for me to openly discuss on some session topics at first but when I also learn many unknown things from the project and now I consider these sessions are precious and some sort of life skill development training or knowledge sharing platforms especially for the young girls and women in the remote corners where they actually don’t have much opportunities to learn and discuss with someone that have good knowledge of these issues. At first the fathers also would not talk much as they had very little knowledge but gradually they become positive as they realize that the problem is silently creating bad effect to the health of their poor girls and rural women. Says, Joyjit Khisa, Programme Facilitator, OLHF Project, Taungya.

Project and Other News

CSO Staff Training on Facilitation in AFHS Refresher Training for Health Service Providers held in Hotel Saikat, Chattogram

A 2-day CSO Staff Training on Facilitation in AFHS Refresher Training for Health Service Providers held in Hotel Saikat, Chattogram on 05 April 2023 and 06 April 2023. The PC and POCT of the OLHF-Taungya project participated in the training program along with the other 18 participants of the rest 09 CSOs PCs and POCTs from three hill districts. The training program is inaugurated by the Program Manager of BNPS, Mr. Sanjoy Majumder, and facilitated by the three MTs from three hill districts. Ms. Loan Liem, SRHR Advisor of Simavi Netherland was also present in the training as an observer.



Photo: Ms. Loan Liem SRHR Advisor of Simavi Netherland with the participants of the training event

The prime objective of the training was to train the POCTs and PCs of each CSOs in order to build good relation between health service providers and the girls of girls’ club. The training event was divided into several sessions, role plays, debates, and discussions. The POCTs and PC of the Taungya actively participated in the sessions and the PC of Taungya, Mr. Kuldeep Roy shared his thoughts in this regard, “The Health Service Provider training is an essential activity of this project to train the Health Service Provider in building effective relation between them and the girls of the girls’ club and this training has built our capacity to train the Health Service Provider well.”



Photo: Group discussion is going on between the MT of Bandarban and the participants

Staff Coordination Meeting of OLHF Project in March and April 2023



Two staff coordination meeting under OLHF Project were held in March and April 2023. It is a regular activity of the project. The meetings were presided over by PC, Kuldeep Roy and participated by the all staff of the project.

In both of the meeting, the experience of Individual field visits, M&E activities, Advocacy activities, preparation of quarterly report 2023, upcoming activities were discussed by the project staffs. However, the PC advised his team to draw attention of upcoming MHM day observation, Teachers training sessions and service provider training session which are scheduled to happen within 2nd quarter of the project. Besides, it is informed that a OCA (Organization Capacity Assessment) session supposed to take place on May 2023 in Taungya.

Photo: ED, Taungya is discussing about the completed activities of 1st quarter with the project staff

Taungya took Creative Project Showcasing, Commitment Taking and Discussion Meeting in Barkal and Bileishori

The OLHF-Taungya project team organized two meetings under the title “Creative Project Showcasing, Commitment Taking and Discussion Meeting” with community leaders, religious leaders, and customary leaders in order to get their support for the girls’ clubs and the girl’s priorities on 26 April 2023 at Beleisori upazila and on 27 April 2023 at Barkal upazila. The participants of these meetings were Union Parishad Chairman, Female Upazilla Vice Chairman, Headman, Karbari and Union Parishad member. The member of the Lotibachchora girl’s club showcased their poster on MHM and on the other hand, the audience of the Belaichori meeting was mesmerized by the acting performances of Dhyupperchor and Digholchori girls’ club members which was based on early marriage. Ms. Mithila Roy, POCT, moderated the meeting of Barkal Upazila whereas Mr. Joyjit Khisa, PF of Beleisori, moderated the Beleisori meeting. The PF of Barkal Ms. Suma Chakma provided necessary support in arranging the meeting and the mentors of the abovementioned girls’ club also played a key role in successfully completion of the meetings. Mr. Kuldeep Roy, PC, OLHF-Taungya, was present in both meetings which were arranged on two consecutive days in two different upazillas.



Photo: PC of Taungya OLHF along with Upazilla Vice Chairman Barkal and UP member is discussing about MHM in front of community people

Taungya remembered the Martyrs of the Great Liberation War on 26th March 2023

Taungya family celebrates 26th March 2023, the Independence Day of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh by offering wreaths to the martyrs of the great liberation war at District Shahid Miner, Reserve Mukh, Rangamati Hill District along with other NGO staff.



Photo: Taungya Family led by ED offering wreaths at Districts Shahid Miner, Rangamati