

Narrative Report

(Standards A and A-flexible)

Financial Support

For all projects supported by the Protestant Agency for Diakonie and Development for Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service (hereafter referred to as Financing Partner) a progress report is required after every six months. The report shall be sent to the Financing Partner 3 months after the end of the reporting period at the latest. Its volume should not exceed a total of 12 pages. Any additional information should be added as appendices. This applies also to statistical data, photographs, etc.

1. General Information

Name of the Organisation	Self- Help Association for Rural people through Education & Entrepreneurship (SHAREE)
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P.O. Box	N/A
Contact Person	Preo Bala Biswas , Executive Director , SHAREE
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Phone number	88-02-9615547, 9615549
Fax number	N/A
Project title	Promoting Gender Sensitive Panchayets of Dalit Community in Bangladesh.
Project number	N-BGD-2015-5064
Project period	From March 2015 till February 2018
Reporting period	From September 2016 till February 2017
Date of report	21 June 2017
Author	Umesh Saha , Project Coordinator

2. Change within the Organisation

During the reporting period, did any important events or changes take place within your organisation?

2.1

related to the management structure?

 Yes**Error! Not a**

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If Yes, please describe:

No

2.2

related to your planning system?

Yes

No

If Yes, please describe:

2.3

related to the composition of your staff?

Yes

No

If Yes, please describe:

2.4

related to other issues?

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No
ject.

If Yes, please describe:

3. Changes of social, political, economic and ecological project context

3.1

Are there important changes (social, political, economic, ecological) in the projects' immediate environment since itsinception?

Yes

No

If Yes, please describe:

Social: Major social changes occurred amongst the beneficiary groups in the project areas during the reporting period are a marked increase of awareness of them on hygiene practice (the usage of clean water, sanitation and maintaining cleanliness), increase in awareness about their children's education, increase in awareness in them, esp. amongst the youths to have some training in marketable skills so that either they can get a job or can do some petty businesses etc. to earn their living. It is also observed that there is an increase in their social mobility and exposure. Dalit and Harijan girls and women are also observed to be free-from-shyness more, aware, organised, a bit empowered, and mobile and exposed. They are, to some considerable extent, are able to demand social and economic benefits of the government, are linked to the local media, elected representatives, politicians and government agencies, and, most importantly, are now actively involved in the Panchayet activities. One of this project's important objectives was to help- women empower so that they can participate in the decision-making processes in both their families and in their institutions. We are happy to report that our beneficiaries have progressed a lot in achieving that goal, and they are consolidating their newly-achieved status.

We are also happy that the children's schools and coaching activities have also marked some progress since children's enrolment and retention rate is better than before, and their successes in learning outcomes impresses both their parents their teachers, who visibly seem happy at the outcomes. Young human rights defenders are also gaining experience and confidence, and we hope, when necessary, they somehow will show their courage and commitment to do the things needed to protect their community interests.

The group effort of Dalit community are strengthening day-by-day. They have started to communicate with the political and local administrative body for their protection. A system developed through lobby and advocacy and regular communication with the local elite viz. the government officers posted in the

localities where the project activities are carried out, local politicians who holds the offices of the local elected bodies and local politics, and local opinion leaders by the Panchayet and Shadow Women Panchayet leaders so that the incidents of social discrimination to Dalits in the public places like schools, markets, restaurants, hospitals can be reduced. They also lobby with the school committees so that Dalit children can educate them freely in the government-run schools. As a result of these advocacy and lobbying activities, in some cases, they have started getting support for their rights and protection, and it is one of the major social changes we have recorded. The community people are hopeful that they could get necessary support if they maintain good relation with the politicians and local administration. SHAREE's effort paid to the community make them confident to face any adversity directed towards them with the political and local administrative support. This also has benifitted them to advance for seeking (and getting) justice.

Political : Political situation during the reporting period was very critical nationally. Some incidences of terrorism, repression on minorities occurred in different parts of the country, and as the consequence of that, entire minority community in Bangladesh including the Dalits and Harijans living in our project areas also got psychologically hurt and that made them worried for their safety and security also. But the political situation in our project areas was almost normal, and nothing of that sort has happened in our project areas that happened nationally. In fact, we want to report 'no change' in this section.

However, the good sign observed is that the community leadership has now started to involve them with the political parties, and that, of course, will help people to raise their voices to dip their community sufferings.

Economic: The Economic condition of our constituents, the Dalits and the Harijans, who are also the poorest of the poor in the country (poorest as their incomes are meagre, poorest as they are disadvantaged, poorest as they belongs to minority, poorest as they could not enjoy the service support, not included in the development mechanism of the government) was under huge pressure due to price hike of the essentials. Though per capita income in Bangladesh is increasing, and poverty decreasing, ultra poors' income hardly increasing. This is very true for our constituents, too, who are facing problems in maintaining their family expences because neither their salary/wage has inceased to the proportion to their expenses nor they have ample opportunity to be self employed. The vested property law uprooting the minority from their legal land that they heriditically possessed. Considering the sufferings of the rural community, the Government has started food support to the poorest family through fair price cards. OMS (open market sale) for selling rice at a lower cost than market price is also offered by the Government but not as adequate as required. Unfortunately, religious minority people or family didn't get the support in the ratio of the population, properly. Employment in the public sector is mostly for the people of majority community. So, there is resentment among educated youth of the minority community. As a result, they are facing serious problems to save them from economic crises. However, SHAREE is supporting the Dalit youths to acquire new skills through different government facilities so that they can involve them in some income generating activities. 201 youth (mostly women) received training and about 20% of the trainees started their IGAs. Availability of more funds can facilitate the process for them to get more support and get involved in self-employment initiative.

Ecological: Due to climate change, changes are occuring in the weather pattern, environment and ecology, and its the new phenomenon that every Bangladeshi are facing today, and so our constituents, directly or indirectly. And surely, the poorest are the main sufferer of climate change events, and so our constituents are also suffering, this or that way. They especially are suffering from early rain or heavy/incesant rain, inundation of their living abode, flashflood, excessive heat or unbearable cold etc. Due to climatic adverse events, our constituents are suffering because they do not have adequate resources, preparedness, and awareness to protect them from the adverse climatic events and the change in their ecology and environment. To confront this new phenomenon of climate change and the challenge it posed, SHAREE prefers to serve the community by helping them raising their awareness and preparedness so that they can reduce their risks of disasters through group meeting at the community level.

3.2

Is the underlying problem analysis of the project still valid considering possible changes in the context?

Yes

No

If No, please describe:

3.3

Do these changes have implications for the work, the project objective and the latter's achievement?

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No

object.

If Yes, please describe:

The changes mentioned above, esp. the social changes reported have implications for our work and objectives and to achieve the objectives since the Dalits and Harijans, in most of the urban and rural areas where we work, and even in the municipal areas, were able to capacitate them to getting closer to the people's representatives than before. As their shyness decreasing and courage increasing, their contacts with the social and political leaders has increased than before. Politicians are also paying attention to them because they are increasingly becoming an organised force. Lobby and advocacy with the local authorities also tends to be fruitful in decreasing the social discriminatory attitude of the mainstream people. Because of the changes happened, they are treated as the citizen of the country, and as such, Dalits can assert and are able to realise some of their rights and are in the process to argue with the authorities to get access to, and realising, their rights. The situation is in their favour also that encourage them to get involved with the political parties, and even, to compete in the local elections. The support from the different service sectors also increases two-fold than before. So, the implications of the changes reported have certainly influenced our work and achieving the objectives of the project.

4. Outcome and Impact

Project objective: Gender sensitive Dalit community Panchayets are developed and they are actively involved in improving socio economic condition and establishing rights of Dalit people.

Indicators (information differentiated by sex or one indicator for the gender dimension)	Achievement of objectives (Assess using indicators)	Planned activities	Implemented activities
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<p>1. By end of project period, adult women of at least 60% of targeted Dalit families are actively participating in decision-making process in their families and community based institutions like Panchayets, Human Rights Defending forums, Dalit Youth Clubs etc.</p>	<p>Baseline data: Percent of Adult Dalit Women are actively participating in decision-making processes in the families and community-based institutions: Family- 41%, Institutions- 8.5% HRD Forum(ol d)- 17% HRD Forum (new) -27% (41%+8.5%+17%+27%)/4 = 23%. During March 2016 – August 2016, women’s participation in decision-making process has increased by 15%. (Calculated internally based on field data obtained by our field staff from meetings, informal talks with 1826 women beneficiaries and from direct observations). During the reporting period, decision-making process has increased by 5%. Presently, the participation rate is (23%+15%+5%) =43% where adult women in the Dalit community are actively participating in decision-making processes in both family and community based institutions.</p>	<p>-Monthly Meeting of Shadow Panchayets</p> <p>-By-monthly meeting of Panchayets</p> <p>-Development of Dalit Youth Club and registration support Quarterly meeting of Youth club</p> <p>-Quarterly meeting of District Committee Conduct Community Hearing</p> <p>-Bangladesh Dalit Panchayet Forum Networking meeting</p> <p>-Development meeting with Bangladesh Dalit and Minority Human Rights Media Defender Forum.</p>	<p>-541 meeting with 591 female members held for raising voice of the women.</p> <p>-249 Bi-monthly Panchayet meeting held in presence of 720 participants of which 327 were women leaders</p> <p>-Dalit Youth Club (mixed group both male and female) formed with 504 Youth of which 32% are female. 2 youth club formed only with women. 8 youth club received consent letter for naming of the clubs and processing for next step. 64 meetings with youth groups held with 272 participants where 131 were female.</p> <p>-36 Community Hearing held with the District Committees with the participation of 721 members where 290 were female. 6 committees are actively communicating with service providers in different sectors.</p> <p>-This was an open session of conversation and dialogue between community and Panchayet. Community voice on the role of Panchayet and Panchayet role for future development of the community was placed for transparency and bringing change in the style of leadership.</p> <p>-2 Development Meetings held as scheduled with 37 members. 20 Media Defenders participated in the meetings for annual plan for 2 days. 12 issues were selected in a participatory consensus.</p>
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<p>2. By the end of the project period, the incidents of social discriminations to Dalit people in all public places like schools, markets, hotels/ restaurants, hospitals, etc have reduced by at least 30% as compared to the baseline situation</p>	<p>Baseline data: Percent of households reported had experience to facing discriminations at schools, markets, hotels/ restaurants, hospitals, etc:</p> <p>At school – 49% In the market: 53% At hotel/restaurants: 47% At hospitals: 57% (49+53+47+57 = 206/4 = 51.5%)</p> <p>Since March 2016 to February 2017, discrimination of the Dalits and Harijans at different public places has reduced by 7%. (It was mainly calculated based on our beneficiaries' feedback).</p>	<p>-Lobby & Advocacy Meeting with local Government Representatives & School Management Committees.</p> <p>-Pre-primary education and coaching support for Dalit children.</p> <p>-Quarterly meeting with Dalit Human Rights Defender Forum</p> <p>-Training to youth on Club operation and Youth Leadership Development. Support to youth and women for Skill Development -Media Mobilisation</p> <p>-Publication of Dalit Kantha. -National & International Day observation.</p> <p>-Rapid response support.</p>	<p>-In the reporting period 20 meetings held in different working areas and in the offices of respective officers with the participation of 220 stakeholders. The community people met and introduced with Upazila Social Welfare Officer, Union Members, Women Affairs officer, Youth Affairs and Union/ Ward Commissioners.</p> <p>-Meeting with school committees by Panchayet members held for generating support for Dalit community children. 9 pre-primary & coaching centres are running with 219 pre-primary and 201 (M-96, F-105) students of Class-III-V. Teachers are trained and refreshed for running the school as planned.</p> <p>-4 meetings with Human Rights Defender Committee held. They shared their effort provided for community support and also observed International Mother Language Day and participated MinmORITY Day Rally, Discrimination Day Rally and human chain.</p> <p>-118 members from different club participated. 49 were female. Club management, transparency, record keeping were shared for development under a democratic process. 24 youth admitted for skill development by project direct financial support. In the District areas 118 admitted for skill development by Govt. Departmental support.</p> <p>-20 journalists of 20 Districts regularly reporting on Dalit issues and the same also published in the monthly Dalit Kantha by the project as the issues selected in their meetings. -12 issues published.</p> <p>-8th March observed with the participation of community people through rally and human chain. 34 male and 31 female also participated in the meeting of Prime Minister on the day.</p>
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<p>3. By the end of the project period access of target people to government safety net and other facilities have increased by 60% .</p>	<p>Baseline data: Percent of target people have access to government safety net and other facilities: 39%. During this reporting period, 36.57%, or to say 37% Dalit men and women had access to government safety-net and other facilities. (Out of 3530 total beneficiary, 1291 (male, female both; ideally families) have received different government safety-net facilities and services. Safety-net services are: Dalit Allowance-128, VGD Card-184, VGF Card-438, Maternity Allowance-96, Education Allowance-75, Old-age Allowance-35, and Widow Allowance-21. Other services: Soft-Loan received from District Social Welfare Office-94, Food-assistance received at reduced price (OMS)-220 and Temple construction grant received by the community-BDT 5.00 hundred thousand).</p>	<p>-Quarterly Meeting of Shadow Panchayets</p> <p>-Quarterly Meeting with Dalit Women Movement in Bangladesh</p> <p>-Pair training of Gender Equity</p> <p>-Orientation to District Committee Members on Legal and Constitutional Rights</p> <p>-Training to Shadow Women Panchayet leaders on Community Development and Panchayet Policies.</p>	<p>-4 meetings with the Shadow Women Representatives held as planned with 196 female and 12 Panchayet representatives. The group members shared their contineus effort for women rights and support from Govt. facilities for the poorest community.</p> <p>-3 meeting held in the reporting period with 31 women leaders.The main issue shared in the meetings were: random visit and interaction with the Safety-net support department, participation in the Panchayet meeting and drive for the community nominee of UP election, marriage registration etc.</p> <p>-2 training course during the period held with 59 participants from different Panchayets. Gender equity should start at the families and should spread throughout the areas and in the society was the main message to practice.</p> <p>-Distinct Committee members are oriented on legal rights, constitutional rights and human rights. Training is planned to raise voice regarding constitutional rights, family law, law against VOW, etc., and rights to defend victims men/women in the local arbitrary sessions. One of the lawyers from the District Judge Court facilitated the course. The training encouraged the participants to mobilise for citizen's rights. The courses were conducted in the Districts and selected young participants attended the courses. Total 80 participants; 36 were female.</p> <p>-60 leaders from Newly formed Shadow Women Panchayets participated in the trainings and they were oriented on community development methods to attain women's rights and Panchayet policies to be taken for implementation in the communities.</p>
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If the project is more complex and composed of different project components, kindly use the spread sheet attached.

4.1

What other changes beyond the ones described in the above table did you observe/detect? Please mention anything that may be of relevance to the project progress.

The changes other than reported in the matrix above are:

- 100% Shadow Panchayet Committees' savings bank account opened; linkage of marginalised women with financial institutions made. The Shadow Women Representatives decided that an amount of savings they should have as savings deposited in their respective accounts so that the money saved and kept can be used to offer treatment facilities to the poorest and to the pregnant mothers during their childbirth. The mentality of women has changed to fight their insecurity, and that put women's prominence in the society and highlights them in the community.
- Women groups empowered through power given to them by the Panchayets for conducting arbitration sessions at Jurain, Baghoir, Lal bag East, and Zigatola.
- More than 60% community people able to get their children's birth registered.
- More than 80% of adult Dalits and Harijans are registered voters now and have National ID Cards.

4.2

In case you observed any direct negative outcome of the project, please describe it, too.

4.3

Which incidents / events could you observe, which you consider to be contributing to or interfering with the accomplishment of the development goal (impact-level)?

- Any spike in militancy nationally, and political disturbances may be a hindering factor to carry out the activities of the project which can impact in achieving the goal of making the Dalits lives' dignified. But, it may not happen either because the Bangladesh Government has taken appropriate measures to contain militancy and political instability which may protect the minorities, and in future, an enabling environment may be maintained so that we can carry out the project without any obstructions and achieve the objectives of the project.

- Dalit leaders and youths have started political activities and joining party politics, which may be beneficial for their safety and security and having employment/job opportunities. It would contribute to attaining the objectives of the project.

- Youth groups mainly consisting of women under Panchayets are developing, and that may change the fundamentals of the traditional views and may also change the leadership pattern. It would also heavily contribute to attaining the objectives of the project.

4.4

Which methods did you apply to assess your project's outcome and impact?

We do monitor our project activities in two ways: Progress monitoring, which generally uses quantitative data emanated out of the field to judge as to whether we are achieving our targets or not. We also use process monitoring, which uses qualitative data, also emanated out of the field through staff interaction with the beneficiaries. Data used are: Beneficiaries' feedback during meeting with them, personalised interactions, direct observation etc. These data generally come to us through monthly meetings. Senior SHAREE management, project coordinator and other project officials also collect data from the beneficiaries while they visit fields. We use these data to measure the outcomes of our project and to know the key aspects of the project performance that helps us assess whether the project is performing as intended to produce desired results.

We supposed to have a Management Information Systems (MIS), but unfortunately, we didn't have one which is, we understand, are tools we should use to evaluate our project's outcomes and impacts. However, we store data in other programmes, such as MS Excel or in MS Word, which are also a compilation of data (both quantitative and qualitative) regarding the activities that are routinely provided by our project staff. We use those data as our major sources of information when monitoring the process of our project. However, we hope to build a MIS, in future, possibly with Brot's assistance.

5. Conclusion for the Future Work

5.1

Based on your experience gathered, do you see a need to change the planned activities in order to accomplish the project objective?

Yes

No

If Yes, please state the reasons and elaborate on the changes:

5.2

In case you require consultancy services, please state the respective area:

-Consultancy on the implementation as OIO to make compliant to current BftW standards and regulations.

-Consultancy on developing a MIS.

5.3

Which are the most important lessons learned during the reporting period?
Please refer to gender equality issues also.

Important lessons learnt are as under:

1. We have learnt that attitude of males in the families can change towards women and they also can accept women as an important decision-maker in the families if development interventions involve both men and women.
2. We have also learnt that conventional attitude of Dalit Panchayets towards participation of women in the panchayets and in the development process is possible if carefully engineered and supported by appropriate measures. Not only participation but women's leadership in Panchayets is also possible. We understand that it is already proven, and they seem to be progressing and capable enough to change as per circumstances call for.
3. We have learnt that if social mobilisation campaigns are carried out involving all (inter and intra society), though slow in the rural or per-urban areas, people's attitude towards Dalits and Harijans can change, and they discriminate them less in public places than before. We also have learnt that the discrimination towards the 'untouchable' in the urban areas is less than rural areas.
4. We have learnt that if families and societal leaders can be involved in a developmental intervention, and if societal support and public services can be generated, empowerment of Dalit women is also possible. In that case, they can show they are able to argue and counter-argue for claiming and/or ensuring their rights and privileges and are capable of carrying out socially-beneficial work successfully.
5. Apart from the above learning, we have some other learning, and those are:
 - Media group mobilisation in favour of Dalit and Harijan is possible and media could be minority-supportive.
 - Dalit and Harijan youths, both boys and girls, can be mobilised as activist and also can involve them in political activities.
 - Dalit and Harijan men and women can involve them in income generating activities if trained adequately in alternative skills and if they are helped to link them to financial service providers.
 - Dalit networks can also be developed, both locally and nationally, if they are provided with support for mobilisation, and their empowerment process is shored up.

Annexe (Narrative Report):

Project components' objectives	Indicators (information differentiated by sex or one indicator for the gender dimension)	Achievement of objectives (Assess using indicators)	Planned Activities	Activities implemented / carried out
1.	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
2.	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
3.	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
4.	1.			