



Annual Report on

“Education Support Project in aid of Dalit Community”



Reporting Period: January- December, 2020

Funded by:
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Preface

The trend that the 'Education support project in aid of dalit community' started in its working area of education and social development, continued in 2020. However, the coronavirus epidemic has severely hampered the project activities this year. The project has had to be carried out on a limited scale since March 2020 due to the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Bangladesh. Although teaching at school level has been suspended for the last 9 months (April- December) due to various government restrictions, but teachers of Dalit Schools have alternatively visited students' homes, provided teaching materials and paid stipends. In addition, house-to-house awareness techniques and proper hand washing with soap have been taught to keep villagers safe from the risk of coronavirus infection.

The project has been played a significant role to develop children's potential through quality education, character building lessons and awareness building on their rights and duties, improving women education and social awareness in 12 villages of Dumuria, Digholia and Keshabpur Upazila (sub-district) including Khulna city corporation areas. All the activities implemented in 2020 are presented through this report.

Status of scheduled activities:

Sl.	Activity Title	Scheduled	Completed	Remarks'
01	Tuition Program including materials support	12 months	12 months	-
02	Monthly stipend to school students	2 times	1 time	-
03	Financial support to college level students	12 times	11 times	-
04	Congratulations to S.S.C passed students	1 time	1 time	-
05	Financial support to the SSC examinee	1 time`	-	
06	Drawing & cultural competition	1 time	-	Canceled due to COVID-19
07	Training on English spoken	1 time	-	
08	Internship course for university level students	1 time	-	
09	Teachers' orientation	12 times	9 times	3 canceled
10	Courtyard meeting with the guardians	144 times	90 times	54 canceled
11	Annual meeting with the guardians	12 times	12 times	-
12	Coordination meeting with educated and employed dalit people	1 time	-	Canceled
13	Meeting with HSC passed married dalit girls	1 time	-	Canceled
12	Annual SMC (School Managing Committee) meeting among Dalit & other Schools	1 time	-	Canceled
13	Annual meeting with Village Development Committee	1 time	-	Canceled
14	Financial support for caregiver course	2 persons	-	Canceled
15	Days celebration	2 times	1 time	1 canceled

Activities in brief

Tuition program

Although the teaching of Dalit schools was going well till March, but all the schools in the country were closed from April as per the government notice due to the increase in coronavirus infection. However, Dalit adopted alternative method so that the education of the children of the backward communities would not be stopped. That is why the teachers of Dalit Schools went to the houses of the students and formed a group of 5/6 students and started teaching them. But it has been done in accordance with the physical distance and hygiene rules.

At the beginning of this year, there were **1,024** students studying in 12 schools at Primary and Secondary level. But as coronavirus infections continued to rise after March, so did the number of students dropping out of school at the end of June. This is mainly due to the growing economic crisis, which is forcing students to have child marriages or involving them to work as a child labor. The following table lists the students except the **21** students (Jan. - June 8 and July- Dec. 13) who dropped out:

Sl. no	Name of Schools	Nursery			Primary			Secondary			Grand Total		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Sholgotia	6	5	11	11	17	28	22	10	32	39	32	71
2.	Mikshimil	3	3	6	21	17	38	15	21	36	39	41	80
3.	Madhugram	10	5	15	32	24	56	26	24	50	68	53	121
4.	Sahos	3	1	4	21	20	41	24	15	39	48	36	84
5.	Chingra	7	2	9	19	17	36	19	22	41	45	41	86
6.	Arongghata	6	2	8	20	19	39	10	25	35	36	46	82
7.	Sonadanga	5	7	12	15	20	35	11	17	28	31	44	75
8.	North Kashipur	4	2	6	8	9	17	7	5	12	19	16	35
9.	Banorgati	3	2	5	11	14	25	5	4	9	19	20	39
10.	Sarutia	4	9	13	30	28	58	37	22	59	71	59	130
11.	Burulia	1	6	7	20	27	47	24	21	45	45	54	99
12.	Sujapur	3	6	9	24	26	50	22	20	42	49	52	101
Total		55	50	105	232	238	470	222	206	428	509	494	1003

According to field data, the rate of child marriage (7 out of 21 students) in 2020 was 0.68%. Information about this is as follows:

Upazila/ locality	Victim of child marriage	Victim of child labor	Education level
Dumuria	4	4	Class 8 to 9
Digholia	1	1	Class 3 & 8
Khulna city	2	6	Class 5 to 8
Keshabpur	0	3	Class 4 to 7



Teaching session before lockdown



Teaching session during lockdown

Distribution of study materials, tuition fees and medical support

As per budget allocation, Dalit distributed exercise books, pens, pencils, scales, etc to school students during the reporting period. Distributed materials were as follows: Nursery Book 102 and Slate 102 pieces, Exercise books (large) 5,252 pieces, Exercise books (small) 3,042 pieces, Pencil 475 pieces, Scale 475 pieces, Pen 7,152 and Chalk 144 boxes to 922 students. Dalit also distributed stationary materials to all schools. In the month of November, Dalit has paid monthly tuition fees BDT 1,61,200 to 611 students from grade IV to X to guarantee their attending classes in other schools. Dalit also spent 11,250 Taka for students' health check-up purpose.



Financial support to college level students

In continuation to provide assistance in higher education, Dalit arranged motivational seminars with college and university going girl and boy students to raise-up their voice against early marriage and establish women rights in the society. But due to the increase in coronavirus infection, the students gathering was stopped from April as per the government instructions. Since then, stipends have been sent to the girls' mobile banking account every month. So, during the reporting period; Dalit arranged 3 seminars (gathering) and distributed 3,18,965 Taka (for 11 months) to 44 girl and 17 boy students.



Congratulations to S.S.C passed dalit students

Although it is a tradition to congratulate SSC passed students through a joyous ceremony every year, but it has not been possible to do so in the current year 2020. So, project staff congratulated the students on alternative ways as there were government restrictions on holding meeting due to the coronavirus outbreak. They went to the houses of the S.S.C passed 46 students in the middle of June 2020 and



congratulated them and gave instructions on admission rules to various colleges. Moreover, gift items have been provided to greet each of them. It is to be noted that as there was no budget allocation for this sector in the project, this activity has been conducted with the financial support of Dalit.

Monthly orientation for Teachers

Dalit has been arranged monthly orientation session for the teachers to develop monthly study plan, giving them motivational guidelines and review the progress. During the reporting period Dalit arranged 9 orientation sessions (3 canceled due to coronavirus outbreak) for them, where 35 teachers (10 full-time & 25 part-time) participated under this project.



Courtyard meeting with the Guardians

By direct discussion with the parents of the students, various social problems can be informed from them; they can be advised to solve the problem as well. For this reason, guardians meetings have been arranged in 12 villages through the facilitation of Community Development Organizer. Several issues like presence of students in schools, demerits of child marriage, human rights and environmental



cleanliness, home based earning etc. As a result of series of years of continuous meetings, there is a positive reflection of behavioral change, increase of home based income and the prevalence of superstition is less noticeable in the villages. During the reporting period Dalit arranged 90 meetings (another 54 canceled due to coronavirus), where 1,680 female and 196 male guardians were participated at these meetings.

Annual meeting with the guardians

The project organizes an annual coordination meeting with the parents every year to ensure that the parents of the backward/ dalit community will pay special attention to the education of their children. On the same day, cultural programs, sports competitions are organized with the participation of the students and the results of the examinations are announced. In continuation of this, Dalit arranged annual meeting with the guardians of 12 school students (separately) during December to encourage the students and guardians through conversation & cultural events. A total of 414 parents and students participated in these events. Villagers of Dalit school area also enjoyed various cultural events that day.



Observation of Human Rights day

As a human development organization Dalit always celebrate the days of rights and dignity with importance. However, due to the corona virus epidemic this year, no activities could be completed as planned due to restrictions on public gatherings. Even then, enhancing awareness on rights of dalit people among the civil society, members of U.P, religious leaders, local leaders and teachers, Dalit has been arranged a discussion meeting on observance of World Human Rights Day on 10th December 2020 at Dumuria

Upazila hall room, Khulna. Total 47 participants including Upazila Executive Officer were participated in the program. Speakers of the meeting called on the administration and law enforcement agencies to ensure the availability of human rights.



Awareness raising activities on COVID-19

Besides the courtyard meetings, awareness-raising activities were underway to keep villagers at risk from the coronavirus since 1st April. The teachers in the project visited every house in the village while maintaining physical distance and taught the family members how the coronavirus is spread? What are the symptoms of coronavirus infection? How to stay safe from coronavirus? What are the rules to follow if infected

with coronavirus and how to take treatment? This has raised awareness among the villagers and the rate of infection in the villages is lower than in the cities. In addition to raising awareness,



health care materials have also been provided to the students.

Conclusion

At present, all kinds of institutional activities are going on in Bangladesh, but there are still restrictions on public gathering related activities. And it is not possible to predict how long this situation will last. Therefore, in the interest of the beneficiaries of the project, Dalit has been implemented the project activities of last 9 months in a very secret and limited extent. As the activities of the project are familiar to the local villagers and stakeholders, they provided all kinds of support to Dalit and took part in the activities. Dalit hope that by 2021, the situation will improve with the introduction of corona vaccine in Bangladesh and there will be no restrictions on the implementation of the project's field activities. Organization Dalit is expressing gratitude to **Ashar Gan Onlus** for helping these vulnerable people of 12 villages. Thanks for being with us.

Case study

The united effort of the youth against the Coronavirus

Sahos Noakati is a small village of Dumuria Upazila in Khulna district. However, much of this beauty seemed to be fading in the grip of the coronavirus. Panic, prejudice, unconsciousness, etc. were ingrained in the thought of the people here, which was a real threat. In this situation, with the guidance of Dalit staff a group of educated youths made a united effort to eradicate them. They formed a team of their own and volunteered to work for the welfare of the people. To this end, they were trying to protect everyone from coronavirus by applying disinfectants in the area, including visiting door-to-door to alert everyone, telling everyone to stay at home and maintaining a safe distance, advising them to use masks, and hand washing techniques with soap or other sanitizers. Everyone in the area is very happy with their initiative and at the same time their village is much richer than before on corona awareness. Now everyone believes that in such a situation, the deadly virus will be eradicated through such effective measures.



Durjoy is dreaming of becoming a Doctor

Durjoy Sarker, son of Dilip Sarker and Saraswati Sarker lives in Chingra village under Dumuria upazila of Khulna district. He studied in Chingra Dalit School from nursery class to class X. His father is a fisherman. They have no cultivable land other than their homestead land. He was very attentive to education. Amidst financial constraints and many limitations, he got A+ grade (G.P.A 5) in the SSC examination of 2020 from science department. He got marks above 90 in each subject. With the help and cooperation of Dalit, he has been able to achieve this result, for which his parents sincerely thanked to Dalit organization. Now Durjoy is dreaming to become a doctor.



Asma got a job in a garment factory

Mikshimil is a beautiful green village of Dumuria upazila of Khulna district. One of the poorest day laborers in this village is Lutfar Sardar. He has two daughters. Asma Khatun is his elder daughter. Asma Khatun was a student of Mikshimil Dalit School since her childhood. She later obtained her post-graduate degree from a government college in Khulna. Her younger sister Rahima Khatun took part in SSC examination this year. Both of them are sponsored student of Mikshimil Dalit School. Asma's sponsor ID is (2/039). It was very difficult for Asma's father to maintain his family of four members, including 2 daughters. In the meantime, when her father fell ill, the whole family fell into a deep crisis.

Asma has been receiving stipend every month for long time. She went through many obstacles and continued her studies. But that did not last long when her father became very ill. Due to her father's illness, Asma left everything and searching for a job. Suddenly she went to Dhaka with her cousin. There she joined in a garment factory as a worker. Asma hopes that through this profession she will be able to make her family self-sufficient.



Bithi's child marriage could not be stopped due to fake birth certificate

Bithi Das lived in Sonadanga sweeper colony in Khulna city. She was a 4th grade student of Sonadanga Dalit School. Her father's name is Suresh Das who is a day laborer and mother Madhuri Das is a housewife. Bithi's illiterate parents were planning how to arrange her marriage to reduce the burden of expenses from the family. But they are not getting that opportunity as the girl is not of marriageable age. According to her birth certificate Bithi's date of birth is 15/05/2005. That's why her father changed her birth certificate from the office of local Counselor and arranged her marriage on 30/01/2020. Knowing this, the teacher of Sonadanga Dalit School informed the matter to 1098 (Govt. provided emergency support telephone number) and told them everything. They took action and



sent local police force with a magistrate. But they could do nothing anything. Because, Bithi's father showed them fake birth certificate. And this way Bithi's marriage has been completed with Akash Das, who is a cleaner by profession. After the marriage they took Bithi to their home in Jashore district.

Several child marriage occurred due to COVID-19

(1) Tanni Tarafdar, daughter of Tapan Tarafdar and Lucky Tarafdar of Arongghata village of Digholia upazila of Khulna district. She was studying in Arongghata Dalit School in the same class in 2020 as she could not pass the eighth class last year. According to her birth certificate her date of birth is 03/09/2003. She has an elder brother Tanmoy Tarafdar who is now an H.S.C examinee. Tanni's father works as a contractor in a jute factory. The coronavirus outbreak has cut off her father's income and he was planning to arrange Tanni's marriage to reduce the family's financial burden. When the educational institution has been closed since the end of March on the instructions of the government, her parents secretly arranged her marriage. The engagement was completed when the teacher of Arongghata Dalit School came to know about the matter. She (Teacher) then informed it to the sponsorship officer and program organizer of this project. Program organizer called to 1098 (Govt. provided emergency support telephone number) and complained to them. On 03/06/2020, the bridegroom came to Tanni's house and took Tanni away to their house and completed the marriage. The bridegroom has his own cattle farm. In this way, the life of another girl was ruined due to child marriage.







(2) Mina Khatun, an 8th class student of Sahos Noakati village of Dumuria Upazila of Khulna district. Mina's father Shahidul Sheikh is a day laborer and mother Rasida Begum is a housewife. Mina had been associated with Sahos Noakati Dalit School since childhood. Her date of birth is 25/12/2005, according to her birth certificate. Mina's parents were planning how to arrange her marriage to reduce the burden of expenses from the family. But they are not getting that opportunity as the





girl is not of marriageable age. However, the outbreak of coronavirus gave them that opportunity. As the educational institution has been closed since the end of March, her parents sent her to her uncle's house and secretly arranged her marriage on 03/06/2020. Everyone was shocked to hear such news but that time there was nothing to do.

Similar incidents:

Name	Resident of	Age & educational status	Parents	Date of early marriage	Photo
Shanta Khatun	Mikshimil village of Dumuria upazila	She is 16 years old and studying in 9 th grade.	Daughter of Aktarul Islam and Sahinur Begum	23/01/2020	
Ritu Khatun	Madhugram village of Dumuria upazila	She is 16 years old and studying in 9 th grade.	Daughter of Saiyed Ali Morol and Shirina Begum	29/05/2020	
Laboni Das	Banorgati village of Khulna city area	She is 13 years old and studying in 6 th grade.	Daughter of Ratan Das	21/07/2020	
Ripa Mondal	Sholgatia village of Dumuria upazila	She is 15 years old and studying in 7 th grade.	Daughter of Sankar Mondal	04/12/2020	

Childrens are being employed in various jobs due to COVID-19

Sonadanga Horijan (sweeper) colony is located in the Ward no-17 in Khulna city corporation area. About 55 to 60 families of Horijan community live here. They are neglected and so-called lower class community people of the society. Although they are educated and they are employed in menial jobs, such as cleaning workers, sweepers, etc. They dominate drug use and various social prejudices. That is why, Dalit set up Sonadanga Dalit School to spread education among them. Besides, Dalit is conducting various awareness activities for them. The children of the area are also being educated through Dalit School. They are not only studying in Dalit School but also in various government and non-government educational institutions. Thus the flow of activities was continued. But due to the recent closure of educational institutions due to Covid-19, the children of that area are being involved in various jobs for income purpose. This is on its way back to its former state. The information of the 3 students involved in a job is given below:

Name of student	Class	Father's name	Mother's name	Job details	Photo
Tilok Das	Seven	Rahul Das	Sathibala Das	Working in a shop in Khulna city market	
Joy Das	Eight	Madhob Das	Laxmi Das	NGO Office cleaner, Sonadanga, Khulna	
Setu Das	Eight	Vim Das	Laxmi Das	Cigarette seller of a Tobacco Company	