

A look into the future for CARE-B programs



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# Gender and Education for All

## Progress and problems in achieving gender equity in Bangladesh

CARE staff member Marufa Aziz Khan and others have written an article entitled, '**Gender and Education for All: Progress and problems in achieving gender equity**', an article which appeared in the *International Journal of Education Development*.

This research highlighted lessons learnt from CARE working areas and has important implications for our Women's Empowerment programming.

The paper has explored the effects of rapid increases in gender parity in

primary schooling in Bangladesh, research however highlights persistent gender discrimination related to educational attainment and learning. The study focused on school-aged children and their gendered educational experiences.

Patterns of gendered discrimination and violence largely mirrored those that girls and boys experienced in their homes and communities, raising important questions about the transformational capacity of current gender parity models.

Persistent gender inequities in schools and communities related to: gender discrimination related to adults' perceptions of girls' versus boys' social worth, capacities, and educational needs and gender-based and sexual violence.

The findings illustrate that support for learning, the quality of the learning experience, and attitudes about learning capabilities are biased against girls throughout school and society.

more on **3**

## Impact of Rainfall on Food Security and Human Mobility

The study 'Where the rain falls' undertaken by CARE in collaboration with CGC and University of Bonn Germany in Kurigram revealed changes in weather patterns and rainfall variability and a clear shift in the seasonality of occurrence.

Climate change is threatening rural livelihoods in northern Bangladesh and impacting on food security, social equity, gender disparity and human mobility. A reduction in seasonal rainfall, compounded by a shift in occurrence, is impacting agricultural productivity and income and employment opportunities for the poor and the marginalized.

Transformations of agricultural practices are taking place (e.g. practice of high yielding varieties, application of irrigation in rain-fed cropping, etc.), but are yet to be adopted by poor and small-scale farmers.

Poor people, those who sell labor in agriculture and/or depend on natural resources are barely able to manage their household finances and migration has become a viable option in securing their livelihoods - however this has a distinct social cost.

The research found that women pay a heavy toll when their male counterparts leave their homestead.

Reduction in meals and consumption of lesser quality food and loans at high interest are some of the negative coping mechanisms that are putting poor families further at risk.

A further social implication of such poverty and vulnerability is increased incidence of violence against women and early marriage for adolescent girls.

Early marriage is significantly contributing to the population growth of Bangladesh.

The research warrants the careful design of community-based adaptation programming and policy interventions such as social safety net measures in rainfall affected poverty stricken areas. If people find employment and they have skills to find an alternative livelihood, there is every reason to believe that people will prefer to remain close to their ancestral homes rather than coming to the urban slums.

This will be an important point to keep in mind for CARE-B when we design our programming in the North-West for our impact groups.

**For more information please contact Selim: [selim@bd.care.org](mailto:selim@bd.care.org)**



**ABOVE: Theatre performance by MISHUK theatre group for SHOUHARDO II**

## CARE-B contributes to America Week

CARE Bangladesh participated in America Week (organized by USAID) at Chittagong.

In addition to an information booth there were film screenings on SHOUHARDO I snapshots, interactive theatre performances on SHOUHARDO II activities and a presentation on our COVAW initiative.

continued from **1** Quality of the learning experience, and attitudes about learning capabilities are biased against girls throughout school and society. There were few opportunities for girls to act as leaders in their communities. Some of the main findings were:

**Discriminatory schools, families, and communities-** linked to women's future roles as wives and mothers and the perception that schooling was not useful for them and might even be antithetical to have these roles.

**Systemic discrimination towards girls-** Girls, boys, fathers and mothers reported that girls could not exercise their right to education, were less safe at school, and were not supported by their parents to participate in school.

Parents in some communities did not encourage their children's education, but this was particularly true for girls because parents viewed early marriage as the appropriate outcome for girls who had reached puberty.

**Equality, empowerment, and schooling: gender-based violence and sexual abuse:** Issues of gender-based violence were most evident in the community.

Girls reported systematically lower protection from abuse than boys both in the community and in school; in contrast, no boys felt unsafe in school.

Gender-based violence continues into adulthood.

Gendered discrimination persists in attitudes and practices within and outside the school, and in some cases, girls' changing participation in school increases their risk.

Gender relations in these schools and communities suggest that increased educational enrollment and retention parity may not lead to empowerment, which has been the previous assumption in development.

This will require a change in thinking at CARE-B about how we approach the issue of women's empowerment and education in the future.

**For a more in-depth analysis please read the article at:**

<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/olpd/people/pubs/dejaeghereGendereducation2012.pdf>

## Introducing SEEMA

Engaging garment workers and sex workers for women's empowerment

CARE Bangladesh has recently initiated a new project called SEEMA – Solidarity and Empowerment through Education, Motivation and Awareness.

The objective of the project is to promote and protect the rights of female garment workers and sex workers through improving their human and social condition.

The project aims to improve self-agency and build greater solidarity to demand rights and entitlements in

improving the quality of their life and living standards.

This will allow the impact groups to advocate on their own behalf and to create the space to influence adoption and enforcement of HR legislation and policies, with a particular focus on labor rights, women's rights and violence against women.

This project will contribute to our work on the Women's empowerment impact group.

This project has been built on the previous work and lessons learned from Protirodh and WHEEL.

The Team Leader for the project will be Kalpana Rani who can be contacted at: [kalpana@bd.care.org](mailto:kalpana@bd.care.org)

The project will be implemented in Mirpur, Tongi and Tangail.

We will bring you more from SEEMA in the future.

## CARE explores improving infant feeding



CARE's health team (through *Akhoni Shomay*) with the Government of Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched a project to assess the potential of multiple micronutrient powders to improve optimal infant and young child feeding.

The powders are distributed among children 6-23 months old in small packages and sprinkled onto meals prepared at home. Other partners in the study are PATH and GAIN – the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition.

The project is part of a larger effort to better respond to the nutritional needs

of mothers and infants during the 1000 day window from conception to age two.

'Sprinkles' are given to infants from six months of age in conjunction with breastfeeding and other optimal feeding practices. This study will help to sharpen understanding of how their appropriate use can be reinforced for maximum benefit to vulnerable households.

Besides evaluating the positive influence of multiple micronutrient powder use on infant and young child feeding practices by Bangladeshi

families, the study will also evaluate its effect on reducing anemia.

The study will enhance CARE-B's approach to childhood nutrition within our on-going programs.

This will also inform plans of the Government of Bangladesh who recently announced its intention to distribute the vitamin and mineral powder supplements nationally.

Results of the study will inform national nutrition programming across the board.

## CARE-B shares its approach on CLTS

CARE-B has shared its experiences of Community Led Total Sanitation Approach in a book entitled "Shit Matters".

The chapter, "The challenges of facilitating CLTS" written by Anowarul Haq and Brigitta Bode explores the difficulties of our experience in *Nijeder Janyia Nijera*. The article highlights how CARE used CLTS not only for sanitation outcomes but also as an entry point to build solidarity and

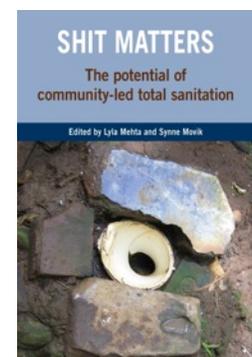
to provide a platform for other development initiatives.

There is an outline of how the approach required process facilitation methods that are inclusive, and community mechanisms and support systems to assist households unable to maintain/repair/replace latrines. Our experience has suggested this has led to more sustainable outcomes.

This approach continues to be implemented in our programs through

projects such as SHOUHARDO II, SETU and WSUP.

**If you would like a copy of this book please contact the A&R team.**



## Wasfia conquers Aconcagua

Former CARE-B colleague Wasfia Nazreen who worked with us in our empowerment team has recently completed a successful expedition to the highest point of South America, Aconcagua in Argentina. This is the highest point on earth outside of the Himalayas.

This is part of her campaign to climb the Seven Summits, the highest

mountains in each of the seven continents. She also succeeded in climbing Kilimanjaro in October.

Wasfia and friends have formed the *Bangladesh on Seven Summits Foundation* that aims to promote outdoor education to women and girls.

This challenges social norms that see the role of women in the home rather



than through participation in outdoor sports.

Wasfia is off to conquer Everest soon. We wish her all the best!

## CARE-B in the Media

SETU: "Building Participatory and Inclusive Governance", *The Daily Star*, 23/2/12  
<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=223453>

NCVI: Coverage of NCVI/Living Blue products, *Prothom Alo Lifestyle*, 21/2/12  
<http://www.prothom-alo.com/detail/date/2012-02-21/news/226446>



## Video of the Month

CARE BANGLADESH has produced an advocacy film highlighting the experience of our work on a men's led movement for social and gender justice based on our experience in ARSHI-ITSPLEY. The film is called "Purush Kar".



For a copy of the film please contact the A&R Team

## In the upcoming March edition:

It's over to you! Interested in sharing your latest news, photos or ideas or want more information about a topic seen in *Action and Reflection*? Contact Soman: [moodley@bd.care.org](mailto:moodley@bd.care.org) or Mansur: [mansur@bd.care.org](mailto:mansur@bd.care.org)

