

## OCTOBER 2017

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We are concluded the following activities, during the period of October 2017 are as follows:

### 1. Consultation on Universal Periodic Review (UPR):

A consultation in order to share draft stakeholders report of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was being organized by National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh (NHRCB) in the auditorium of Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) on 2nd October 2017.

Shirin Akhter, Chairperson and Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator of WDDF were present in this program. Shirin Akhter stated that, education system of Women with Disabilities is very limited and due to infrastructural and informational inaccessibility most of the Girls with Disabilities aren't being included in education system properly. Besides, public transports aren't disability friendly as well as Women with disabilities are always depriving from obtaining justice due to inaccessibility. Budget should be allocated for Persons with Disabilities not only under 'social safety net' but also in specific areas of national budget.

### 2. Discussion meeting with World Bank:

A discussion meeting on disability inclusion in World Bank with civil society was being organized by Worldbank on 4th October 2017 in the Auditorium of World Bank office.

Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director, and Samira Haque, Accounts Coordinator, WDDF were present in this program. Ashrafun Nahar mentioned that, disability issue is being included only in disability related legislations and policy but not in all legislations and policy properly; as a result, all legislations and policy are not being disability inclusive. E.G in draft 'Road safety and Transport Act 2017', disability inclusive transport was being mentioned as invalid carriage. Then we on behalf of WDDF organized a discussion meeting with the secretary of Road and Bridge Ministry and took permission in order to review the act for including disability issue properly within one week. After that, we organized a workshop with the participation of a number of DPOs, review the Act and submit according to the assigned date and then disability issue is being included. So, most of the time, it is very challenging for us.

### 3. International workshop:

An international workshop on 'Better mobility of Persons with Disabilities' was being organized by World Bank in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director, and Samira Haque, Accounts Coordinator, WDDF were present in this workshop. The Scenario of accessibility of Persons with Disabilities in roads and transports of developed and developing countries are being presented. Ashrafun Nahar stated that, inaccessible footpath, under pass and Over bridges are an enormous barrier for mobility of Persons with Disabilities. So, in order to reduce these barriers, WDDF has adopted a number of initiatives and in the consecutiveness of these initiatives, we make advocacy with the Mayors of South and North city corporations with a number of proposals about accessible Under pass and Over bridges of roads including making ramps with footpaths and setting up Braille block. Though at first they couldn't understand but finally they agreed with us. Now it is seen that, ramps are made with very small number of footpaths but these ramps are surrounded by pillars; Braille block has been setting in footpaths but light post, police box and pillars for telephone line are in the middle of footpath. So, barriers aren't removed for us finally.

### 4. Human Chain:

A human chain of Persons with Disabilities on the occasion of observing 4 years of enacting 'Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013' was being organized by the self initiative of Persons with Disabilities entitled Disabled Citizens Unity in front of National Pressclub, at 10.30 AM,

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director, Shirin Akhter, Chairperson, Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator and Samira Haque, Accounts Coordinator of WDDF were present in this Human Chain with more than Six hundred (600) Persons with Disabilities. Ashrafun Nahar and Shirin Akhter mentioned in their speeches that, Already Four years have passed of enacting 'Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013' but mentionable initiative hasn't been visible for implementing this legislation. As a result, fundamental rights of Persons with Disabilities are extremely being violated in many cases. So, through this Human Chain, we, Persons with Disabilities would like to submit our demands to the Government and country people that, we're the citizens of this country, we would like to contribute in development process. It is immensely important to consider our demands for inclusive development and without inclusive development SDGs won't be achieved and in this consequence national development will extremely be interrupted.

### 5. Seminar:

A seminar on Business and human rights was being organized buy National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh (NHRCB), in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel on 11 October 2017.

Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director, and Samira Haque, Accounts Coordinator, WDDF were present in this seminar. Ashrafun Nahar recommended that:

1. on going institutional cooperation for job considering Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is charity based Thinking for Persons with Disabilities but at present they're ready for doing job in managerial position.
2. II) government should rebate tax due to accomodate Persons with Disabilities in the working institutions of Corporate sector through reasonable accomodation otherwise they've to pay an amount of subsidy to the Government which will be utilised in the benefit of Persons with Disabilities.
- III) We should think about equity with equality and Government should take necessary initiative for implementing National Building Code (NBC), UN CRPD and SDGs.

### 6. Consultation:

A consultation on "Challenges faced by Women in work places; Way forward and role of stakeholders" was being organized by National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh (NHRCB), in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel on 15 October 2017.

Shirin Akhter, Chairperson and Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator of WDDF were present in this consultation. Shirin Akhter stated that, Women with Disabilities have to face multifaceted challenges in work places. The mentionable challenges are as follows:

1. Inaccessible roads and public transport;
2. II) Infrastructural and informational inaccessibility in work places;
- III) discriminatory attitude to the Women workers with Disabilities along with lack of reasonable accommodation;
1. IV) Only Women with mild Disabilities (Mild Disability in one hand or one leg) are getting job but Women with severe Disabilities (Wheel Chair user, Visual Impaired, Speech and Hearing Impaired, without hand) are being deprived from getting job and Persons with Disabilities, specially Persons with Visual Impairment aren't being allowed in Judicial Service Commission (JSC) exam;
2. V) Though 1% quota has been declared in First class job but not enlisted in gadget;
3. VI) Ten% quota has been allocated for orphan and Persons with Disabilities jointly and in most cases, Persons with Disabilities are being deprived.
7. TV Talkshow:

WDDF organized a Talkshow entitled "Power Talkshow" on "Access to Justice of Persons with Disabilities" on ATN Bangla is being recorded at 7.30 PM, on 16th October 2017, and broadcasted at 12 AM, on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The allocated time for the program is One hour and the speakers of this talk show were Ms. Shirin Akhter, Chairperson, Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF), MS. Sultana Kamal, Chairperson, We Can, Former Adviser, Caretaker Government and Kazi Reazul Hoque, Chairman, National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh (NHRCB). In the speech of the conversationalists, existing barriers and challenges of Persons with Disabilities specially, Women with Disabilities in access to justice, violence against Women with Disabilities, way forward and role of stakeholders are enlightened to the audience. Simultaneously, it has also been clearly pointed out through the discussion of the conversationalists that, how the human rights of Persons with Disabilities are being violated due to the inaccessibility of Persons with Disabilities in all aspects of justice system.

The speakers are also discussed the complexity Women with Disabilities always have to face, the cause and their uninterrupted sufferings due to such existing inaccessible environment for them. Simultaneously, it is demonstrated that, the initiatives have been adopted by WDDF in order to include Women with Disabilities in mainstream development through reducing this complexity of inaccessibility in different institutions as well as it also has mentioned about the importance of allocation and proper utilization of national budget on behalf of Government for reducing the barriers in the areas of promoting and preserving human rights. Besides, Speakers are also discussed about national and international legislations, documents and declarations in order to ensure the Universal Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and how the Women with severe Disabilities have been deprived from national development process due to existing inaccessible environment.

Mentioning about the Government initiatives speakers said that, despite of having number of Government declarations and orders for creating Universal Accessibility but no one of those has been implemented properly. Pointed out the reference of a case study of victim Girl with Intellectual Disability, Shirin Akhter stated that, inspite of having Two legislations for promotion and protection of rights of Persons with Disabilities; a 13 years Girl with Intellectual Disability, named Takiya Khatun, Vill: Charkushla, 3 Chaklada union, Tha: Terokhada, Dist: Khulna was raped by a Seventy years man in January 2016 and gave birth to a boy baby. On behalf of the offender Union Parisad Chairman proposed the victim girl's family to resolve the incident of this rape through sum compensation but Takiya's family hasn't agree with this proposal and with the support of WDDF, file a case. In order to taking revenge of this incident, on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Din Islam, Chairman, 3 Chaklada union, Terokhada, Khulna ordered his flatterers to strike Takiya's mother with sharp instrument on her head and even after having she fell down on the ground they're beating her with heavy sticks cruelly until she became senseless. It was a very heartrending scenery, while a group of men with the order of a union parisad Chairman were beating a helpless woman lie down on the ground but nobody has nothing to do. After having stopped their beating, it was seen that, Takiya's mother lied down on the ground losing sense, became injured seriously and nonstop bleeding from her head. Her relatives admitted her in hospital and Thirteen stitches had to put on her head. At the time of WDDF representatives visit, she was seriously ill, even she couldn't walk and her whole body grasped with the spot of injury. We were counseling her, suggested her to be patient and assured her that, we are always with you; we've already informed about this shocking incident to the relevant authorities of Dhaka and now we'll report to the local government, media and law enforcement agency of Khulna to handle this issue rightly, seriously as well as to protect your family from this type of in humanitarian torture.

However, in the consequence of strong advocacy of WDDF and with the cooperation of National Human rights Commission Bangladesh (NHRCB), law enforcement agency and Local Government we rescued the family to some extent and protected from continuous threats and torture.

DNA test report is positive and now we're waiting for judgment.

Simultaneously, She also mentioned that, 'United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)', 'Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013' and 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS)' ensured the duties of state parties to get justice for Persons with Disabilities and WDDF is enthusiastic to provide technical suggestion and cooperation in this ground. Concurring all the challenges and barriers, Kazi Reazul Hoque, Chairman, National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh (NHRCB) mentioned that, government is very positive and sincere towards Persons with Disabilities and in the consequence of government's sincerity, Two legislations have already been passed by the House of Nation in order to protect the rights of Persons with Disabilities. We've already submitted National Action Plan of 'Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013' to the Social Welfare Ministry, Possibly it will be approved soon. Besides, on behalf of Social Welfare Ministry, they've taken a number of programs and initiatives to reduce these challenges of Persons with Disabilities. Finally, It is also urged in this talk show to the policy makers, Government along with the related and responsible authorities of creating Universal Accessibilities to adopt time required and proper initiatives to reduce this dilemma considering the types along with the requirements of Persons with Disabilities. Otherwise, due to unproductivity, ineffectiveness, backwardness and social exclusion of almost 24 million Persons with Disabilities, the dream of poverty free Bangladesh will ultimately be interrupted.

#### 8. Change makers National Assembly 2017:

A National Assembly of 'Change makers' on prevention Women torture and violence from family and society was being organized by We Can in collaboration with BLAST, BRAC, in Bangla Academy, on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

Shirin Akhter, Chairperson and Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator of WDDF were present in this program. Shirin Akhter said that, Women with Disabilities become victim of rape and violence due to their disabilities and most of the times they'ven't get justice due to inaccessibility in justice system. So, we should include this issue and make strong advocacy to reduce the challenges of getting justice for Women with Disabilities.

#### 9. Discussion meeting:

A Discussion meeting on 'Accessibility of Women and Persons with Disabilities in public places in order to build inclusive society' was being organized by Work for Better Bangladesh (WBB) in its office, on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator, WDDF was present in this discussion meeting. A research paper on utilization of sports field and park for Persons with Disabilities is being published in this discussion meeting. Md. Hasanuzzaman mentioned that, different sports events of Persons with Disabilities should be organized in sports field and park at the time of different day observance. Interview about utilization of sports fields and parks of Persons with Disabilities from responsible persons of Government and City Corporation should be taken and included in this research paper. Besides, opinions and thoughts of non Disabled Persons about accessibility of Persons with Disabilities in sports fields and parks should also be included in this research paper.

#### 10. Consultation:

A Consultation on 'Gender Diagnostics and Policy of Social Protection issues of National Social Security Strategy', organized by Cabinet Division and General Economic Division in Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), on 26th October 2017.

Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director, and Samira Haque, Accounts Coordinator, WDDF were present in this consultation. Ashrafun Nahar has submitted following recommendations on disability issue for inclusion in National Social Security Strategy (NSSS):

1. Accessible road and transport,
2. II) Need based and required assistive device distribution,
- III) Life insurance,
1. IV) Care giver allowance for elder Women and Women with Disabilities,
2. V) Disability allowance for poor and incapable Persons with Disabilities,
3. VI) Abstaining Persons with Disabilities from begging and include them in employment through need based training,
- VII) Ensure inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in all parts of NSSS,
- VIII) Disability identification from 0 to 4 years children and ensure their inclusion in education,
1. IX) ensure infrastructural and informational accessibility for Students with Disabilities in educational institutions,
2. X) Enhancing consciousness about reproductive health among adolescence Girls with Disabilities.

#### 11. Training:

A Two days training with the participation of 28 different types of Women with Disabilities including their parents almost total 38, on "United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)" (Article 13, 15, 16) and "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" (Goal 16) in order to create easy access to justice was being organized with the initiative of Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF), from 30th to 31st October 2017, in the Auditorium of Society for Participatory Education and Development (SPED), Road-6, House-75, Munsurabad.

This training was divided in to Three parts:

1. Inaugural session
2. Core session on the articles of UNCRPD and
3. Core session on Goal-16 of SDGS.

Two core sessions are being discussed in Two days and there was One fascilitator and Two Co-facilitators to conduct the training theoretically and practically for the Women with Disabilities properly. The representatives from government and corporate sector were present as Chief Guest and Special Guest in this training.

The inaugural session of this training is being started at 11.00 AM, 30th October 2017, with the welcome remarks of Suraiya Akter Bably, Treasurer, WDDF. After welcome speech, an introductory session of all the participants is being conducted by Md. Hasanuzzaman and all the participants are introduced with each other in this session. After having introductory session been finished, Shirmin Akter Dolon (Crutch user) General Member, WDDF is being requested to share her challenging experiences as a student of Honors (2<sup>nd</sup> year) in English of Rajshahi College and

Rounak Jahan Usha (Wheel Chair User), General Member, WDDF is being requested to deliver her speech about her challenging experiences as a student of Masters (Final year) in Sociology of Eden University. Followed by the speech of participants, Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Manager, Shyamali Branch, Rupali Bank Limited,

Is being requested to deliver his speech as special Guest about his experience, responsibilities and duties for Persons with Disabilities on behalf of Corporate Sector to make our activities easy and helpful. He is very sincere, responsible and also very glad to be invited in this program. After that, K M Shahidujjaman, Officer, City Social Service Office (Circle-6), Department of Social Service, is being requested to deliver his speech as Chief Guest. He said that, he is agreed with the existing barriers of Persons specially Women with Disabilities; Government is very positive towards Persons with Disabilities and on behalf of Social Welfare Ministry along with Department of Social Service they've adopted a number of initiatives to reduce these challenges step by step.

This inauguration program is being presided over Shirin Akhter, Chairperson, Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF).

#### Core sessions of the 1<sup>st</sup> day training:

It is noted that, since most of the Women with Disabilities are from very grassroot level and they're participating in this type of training for the first time; So, the core session of 1<sup>st</sup> day is being divided in to Three sessions:

1. Initial discussion,
2. 1<sup>st</sup> session and
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> session.
4. Initial discussion: In initial discussion, purpose and importance of this training for Women with Disabilities including the required information, expected learnings/aims of this training, gaps and challenges of Persons specially Women with Disabilities in the issue of access to justice. are being discussed by Shirin Akhter, Chairperson, WDDF and Co-facilitator of this training.

Followed by this discussion, Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator, WDDF and Co-facilitator of this training discussed a number of instructions for the training participants and request them to follow these instructions strictly at training period in order to make this training effective. After that, participants are requested to express their expectation from this training, one expectation for each participant to analyse their understanding level.

#### 1st session:

**This session is being facilitated by** Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director of WDDF and Facilitator of this training.

The topic of this session is “United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)”

(Article 13) “Access to justice”, (Article 15 “**Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**” and (Article 16)” **Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse**”.

This topic includes:

1. What is United Nations and UN CRPD?
2. II) What is Access? and What is justice?

III) Key speeches of these articles.

1. IV) Why are these articles important to know for us?
2. V) What is the connection between article 13, 15, 16 and obtaining justice?

**2nd session:**

**This session is being facilitated by Shirin Akhter, Chairperson along with Md. Hasanuzzaman, Program Coordinator, WDDF and Co-facilitators of this training.**

A number of topics closely related with this training are being discussed in the second session.

The topics include:

1. Connection between ‘Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013’ and ‘UNCRPD’.
2. II) What is Disability and barrier?

III) Types of disability(In light of question of the participants).

1. IV) Relation of Equality, equity and non discrimination.
2. V) Duties of Local Government for getting justice in light of ‘Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013’ and ‘UNCRPD’.

Core session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day:The key topic of this day is “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”

(Goal 16 “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”)

The core session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day is divided in to Two sessions.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> session and
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> session.

These sessions are being facilitated by Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director and **Shirin Akhter, Chairperson, WDDF along with Facilitator and Co-facilitator of this training.**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> session includes:
2. I) Recapping the discussing issues of 1<sup>st</sup>
3. II) What is Accessibility?

III) What is Reasonable accommodation?

2nd session includes:

1. What is Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
2. II) What is Inclusive? and What is Institution?

III) Key speech of this Goal.

1. IV) Why is this goal important to know for us?
2. V) What is the connection between goal 16 and obtaining justice?

The facilitators suggested to the participants that, everybody should have proper conception and knowledge about these treaty and document concurrently they should have try to use the specific reference of these treaty and document for utilizing in required area. In case of any requirement, WDDF will always take proper initiative to cooperate to the Women with Disabilities through legal aid service providing organizations. Otherwise, it will be very difficult for them to enjoy their rights through the implementation of these treaty and documents properly.

From the responses of all the participants, it would be noted that, this is an effective and time required training for them. Most of the participants haven't any idea about these treaty and document and they aren't aware about the basic rights for Persons with Disabilities are mentioned in these treaty and document. The participants are also pointed out that, Persons specially Women with Disabilities of remote areas are deprived from Government services and facilities and due to lack of accurate information they are always left behind. So, considering the susceptibility of Persons specially Women with Disabilities, this type of training should be organized in divisional and district level regularly.

12. Discussion meeting:

A discussion meeting on 'Integrated National Strategy' was being organized by NGO Affairs Bureau in the Auditorium of its office, on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

Ashrafun Nahar, Executive Director, and Samira Haque, Accounts Coordinator, WDDF were present in this discussion meeting. The issues of transparency and accountability of Non Government Organizations (NGOs) are being discussed in this meeting. Ashrafun Nahar said that, we, the NGOs are responsible for ensuring their transparency and accountability but we expect that, as an inclusive institution NGO Affairs Bureau will ensure its responsibility and accountability through ensuring its universal service providing opportunity. The office of NGO Affairs Bureau should be accessible for all types of Persons with Disabilities. We, on behalf of WDDF have submitted proposal on accessibility issue and it was assured us that, this office will be completely accessible. But it is seen that, lift is inaccessible for the Persons with Visual Impairment and wash rooms aren't accessible for the Persons with Wheel Chair users. So, we would like to request to ensure universal accessibility in this office premises.

## ABOUT WDDF

The estimated number of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) in Bangladesh, is around 24 million people, which constitutes 15 % of total population. 15% of Population have a disability.

Half of these are female. This is 12 Million girls and women with disabilities (WWDs).