

Uttaran
A NNUAL R EPORT
2007-2008

Devastating Cyclone SIDR Hit Southwest Region of Bangladesh in November, 2007



Uttaran

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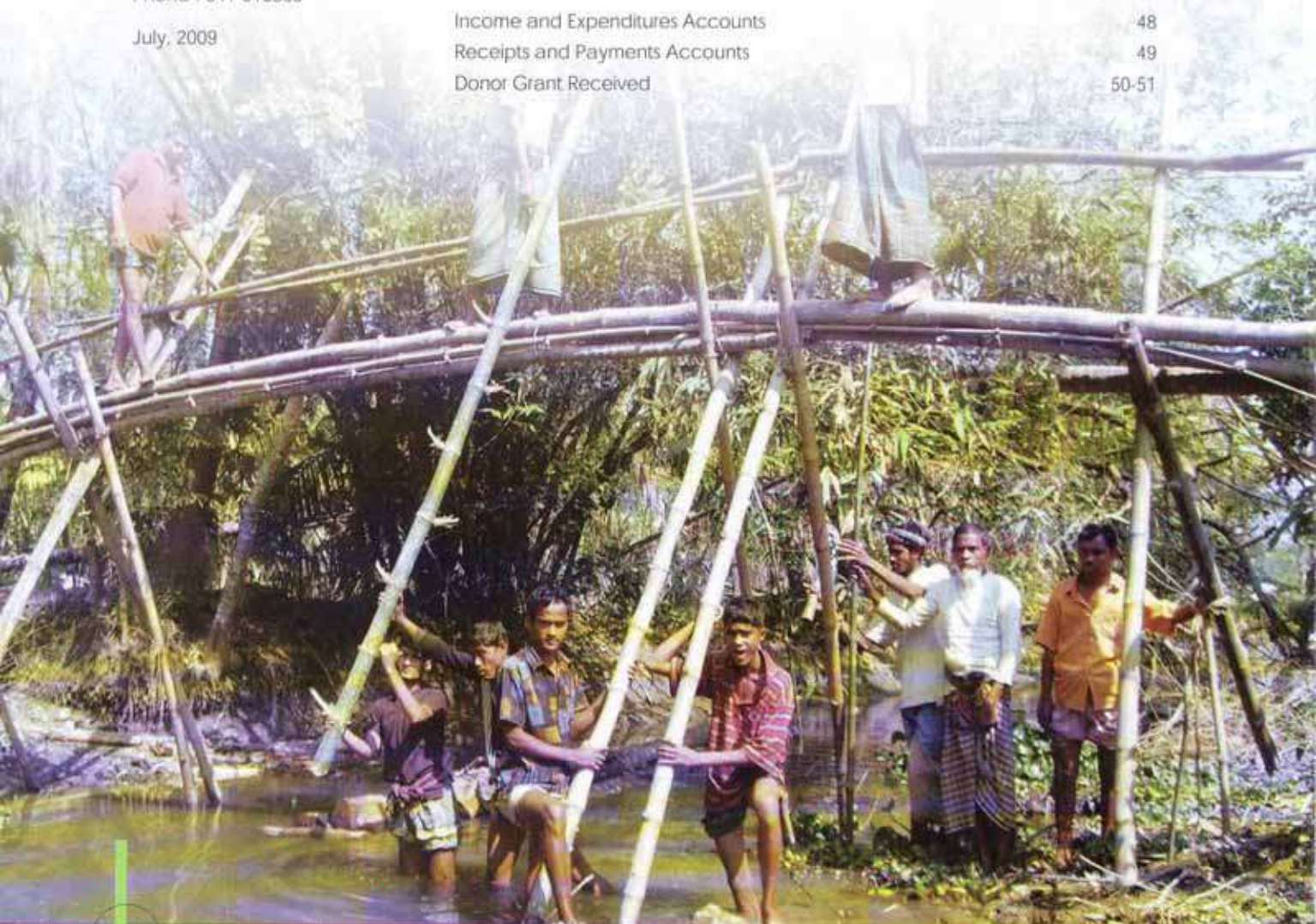
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Message from the Director

We have passed another year amid struggle for the people of southwest coastal region of Bangladesh. It has been a time of both fear and hope. The people of southwest coastal region faced another natural disaster with courage and conviction despite the economic hardships and loss of life. Uttaran worked together with the communities to face the natural calamity.

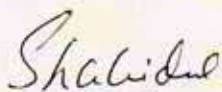
At the beginning of the year I was in jail. The colleagues of Uttaran, well-wishers, members of the primary groups and representatives of the civil society gave their utmost to make sure Uttaran survived. Despite this crisis Uttaran survived with the love of common people. At the end of August 2007 I was freed from jail. In my absence the Acting Director guided the organisation in its day-to-day activities.

On 15 November, 2007, Cyclone SIDR struck the coast of Bangladesh and destroyed infrastructure, caused numerous deaths and disrupted economic activities. Uttaran provided unconditional support to the affected people to help them recover and stand on their own feet. The long associated development partners of Uttaran also extended their support. A substantial period of 2007-08 was spent fighting against natural disasters.

The experts have already opined that the cyclone was a result of climate change and that Bangladesh is one of the most natural disaster prone countries. Scientists have warned us that the frequency of disasters will increase because of climate change. Year on year, we are seeing this increase in the southwest coastal areas.

This report presents a summary of all our programmes, projects and activities.

We salute primary group members, elected peoples representatives, local leaders and supporters, local administrations, likeminded NGOs and civil society representatives, networks/alliances, local communities and the dynamic and committed colleagues of Uttaran, common people for support and solidarity to our development endeavour. Special thanks to our development partners as well as other individuals who stood with us during the difficulties we encountered along the way. We hope you will continue to be with us. We are confident that Uttaran will go forward with the help of all and contribute to establish a poverty and discrimination free Bangladesh.



Shahidul Islam
Director



Introduction

Last year was another challenging year for Uttaran suffering violence and harassments. The Joint Forces arrested Shahidul Islam, Director and one of the founders of Uttaran, on 27 January 2007 just a few days after Emergency Rule began. They tortured him and he was seriously injured. Following his arrest the police filed four cases against him. The police failed to prove his association with any unlawful activities and court acquitted him. After seven months in prison the Director was granted bail and released on August 21, 2007. By that time another financial year had started. During his arrest an Acting Director was appointed as per the decision of the Executive Committee. He took over overall responsibility for Uttaran until the Director was freed from jail. Uttaran faced a hard time during that period as the land grabbers and other culprits tried to destroy Uttaran. To prevent this many people worked hard to sustain the organisation and in the end the conspirators were failed. The dedicated colleagues worked tirelessly to make the organisation lively and active.

Uttaran started its journey in 1985 from Jatpur village of Tala Upazila and is now directly implementing numbers of program to improve socio-economic condition of extreme poor in Satkhira, Khulna, Jessore, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts under Barisal and Khulna divisions of South west of Bangladesh. A programme on eye care and combating children's blindness is being implementation in 9 districts of Khulna division (Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Jessore, Noraile, Jhinaidhaho, Meherpur, Kustia and Chuadanga). In addition, the organisation implemented relief and rehabilitation activities to support the people affected by the cyclone SIDR. Uttaran now has the capacity to work with more people than ever before. Despite the crisis we have faced, the organisation has moved on and become stronger.

On 15 November, 2007, Cyclone SIDR struck the coast of Bangladesh destroying infrastructure and disrupting economic activities. It claimed 3,406 lives and a further 1,001 people were reported as missing. More than 55,000 were injured and close to 9 million people in 30 districts were affected. The Government estimated the number of deaths to be 4,000. Quoting unofficial sources, the news media stated that the number of deaths could be up to 20,000 and the Red Crescent Society reported that the number of deaths could be up to 10,000. Half of those affected by SIDR were children. According to UNICEF, around 4 lacs of those affected were children under 5. The most vulnerable groups include landless labourers, female-headed households and marginal farmers with very little land or other sustainable sources of income (WB 2008). SIDR damaged an estimated 8,075 km of roads in 11 districts. The primary impact of Cyclone SIDR on water supply and sanitation facilities was in rural areas. The Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) reported damage to 11,612 tube wells, 7,155 ponds and over 55,000 latrines. Forest Department estimated that 10-12 percent of the trees of coastline 25- 30 thousand hector forestland were completely damaged and Cyclone SIDR seriously damaged 10-12 per cent of the main forest site. Nearly 13 thousand educational institutions were damaged which hindered educational life of nearly six hundred thousand students. Cyclone SIDR caused significant damage to rural infrastructure and assets as well as losses of production valued at BDT 30.2 billion, (US\$ 438 million) of which 95% are production losses. The loss of production in all crops refers to an estimated 1.3 million metric tons, of which 63 percent (0.8 million metric tons) is aman.

In the aftermath of Cyclone SIDR, one of the worst disasters in Bangladesh history, the national and international communities, donor agencies and financial institutions stepped up to deliver aid, relief and rehabilitation to those affected by the storm. Uttaran also stood beside the affected people and, at the beginning, began work in the area using its own funds. Later with the support of development partners, Uttaran implemented a number of relief and rehabilitation activities.

Uttaran has crossed many hurdles in 2007-08. However, the organisation has implemented the ongoing project activities successfully. The activities of Uttaran implemented during the reporting period are outlined below:

Rights and Social Justice Programme

Uttaran protects the constitutional and citizenship rights of socially powerless and marginalized groups like the poor, landless, female-headed households, religious and ethnic minorities. The poor communities of southwest Bangladesh face oppression, injustice, and exploitation by the powerful classes. Insecurity and mistrust dominates the life of the people in the southwest and the rate of suicide and homicide are high. Uttaran has taken number of initiatives in the hope of building a trustworthy environment that can be used to establish citizenship rights in the region. These are:

1. Social Mobilization

Although our constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens irrespective of ethnicity, religion, race, gender or caste but discrimination still persists in our society. The poor people are the usual victims of this discrimination. For example, the landless poor are often deprived of their entitlement to Khasland, even though they have legal rights to own Khasland. The lawyers and the trainers provide training to the members of the primary organisations on existing laws, citizenship rights and universal human rights. The contents of training course include: women and law; human rights issues; land rights; and poverty.

The awareness activities of Uttaran have motivated the common people and the wider civil society of the southwest to join the struggle for Khasland. Uttaran organized a strong civil society committee called Bhumi Committee (Land Committee) to mobilize the landless peasant for recovery and re-distribution of khasland. Now a days, under eight upazila there are 8 Upazila Bhumi Committee and they have a Central Bhumi Committee.

Uttaran has established a strong links with the section of civil society, LEBS, CBOs and NGOs in the southwest region of Bangladesh that are committed to active engagement on the promotion of the human rights. Uttaran also set up a regional citizen committee namely "Network for Asserting Human Rights (NAHR)" which seeks to involve civil society across the region. This network organised rally, demonstration, persuasion, and lobby for establishing rights of the poor people during the reporting period.

In 2007-2008, Uttaran facilitated training, seminars and workshops in collaboration with the NAHR on domestic violence, acid throwing and prevention, untouchability and justice. NAHR organised a well-attended rally in Tala Upazila to make people aware of women's rights. Another rally and a human chain were organised by NAHR on Human Rights day and attended by primary organisation members, federation members, shalish committee members as well as civil society representatives and like-minded NGOs. These events were arranged in Satkhira, Jessore and Khulna district. LEBs, UPs, NGOs, and civil society representatives supported NAHR activities. On request of community members requested, the NAHR has contributed to the shalish and mediation process. NAHR is working to enhance greater participation by women and religio-ethnic groups in the networks.

2. Khasland Recovery and Settlement

The economy of rural areas of Bangladesh is based on agriculture but the majority of the farming families do not own cultivable land. Even now a day, around 27 per cent population are the extreme poor peasants and some of them do not even own land for their homestead. They are live on embankment or khasland or other people's land. In Khulna Division, the number of households owning no land has increased from 7.68% in 1996 to 9.56 % in 2008. In Khulna district, the percentage of households with no land stands at 22.67% and in Satkhira it is 9.09%. At the same time the number of agricultural labour reliant households in Khulna Division is increasing.

There is law in Bangladesh, which was enacted in 1984 for distribution of government khasland among landless people. Mainly with support from Uttaran, the landless people in this region have carried out their struggle to exercise their rights to khasland. In most cases the administration and law enforcing agencies favour the elite class. The landless were arrested several times and an alternative leadership evolved from them to carry the resistance movement forward. The participation of women members of poor landless families is low in the land rights movement and these women have little access to local government services.

From our experience it is evident that in order to secure access to land and improve its productivity the landless groups in the area need external support. Their ability to establish solid alliances with NGOs, political parties, development agencies and others is vital to ensuring that the authorities hear their demands. External organisations can provide landless groups with information and resources that they would otherwise lack access to and increase their capacity to mobilize support for their cause. In this context, Uttaran and its fellow 10 partners such as Banophul, Nari Unnyan Sangstha, Nakshi Kantha, Palli Chetana, Shushilan, IDEAL, ASDO, Mukti Alo, Mukti Parishad and RUPALI have successfully implemented the Apar project since March, 2004. Uttaran also provided legal support to imprisoned leaders of the landless to push for their release and provided subsistence to their families.

The organisation has reaped some successes from its current interventions, which have led towards greater access to and establishment of land rights among the landless. The outcomes of our interventions have been: the creation of social capital (e.g. awakens the awareness of the poor landless people of the area about their rights to the Khaslands); organising the people into groups; contribution to poverty alleviation (e.g. land, whatever small amount it is, provides scope for extra earning for the household and reduces poverty).

Normally landless people have to pay a bribe to the local land administration to make sure the DCR grants them permanent settlement. The land settlement process reduced scopes of bribing and corruption and has saved a lot of money of the poor people. Many people still have to pay a bribe but the amount and frequency has been reduced. The process has also reduced the trend and incidence of case filing with the police station and courts, reducing unwanted and prolonged expenditures in courts, which allow the poor to retain more income.

Uttaran has been able to serve the causes of the landless people by providing support for social mobilization activities and legal aid. Uttaran worked with civil society groups to form pressure groups to influence public opinion and make it favourable to the landless movement and the proper distribution of Khaslands by the public officials.

In 2004, Uttaran was able to recover some land for the first time after a long struggle. The land amount was 559.06 acre, which was distributed to 847 families through DCR. At the same time 20.93 acre land was distributed to 65 families permanently. In the following year, Uttaran recovered 715.40 acre of Khas land from March 2005 to February 2006 and distributed to 1116 land less people through temporary settlement. Permanent settlement was given to 256 persons. As a continuation of this effort from 2006 March to February 2007 a total of 2170.71 acre Khas land were recovered and distributed to 3053 families. During this period 1056.90 acre land were distributed to 1098 persons permanently.

The adjacent chart illustrates the number of Khasland receiver from 2004-2008. In 2004 Uttaran was able to recover some land for the first time after a long struggle. The recovered land amounted to 559.06 acres, which was distributed to 847 families through DCR. At the same time 20.93 acres of land was distributed to 65 families permanently. In the following year, Uttaran recovered 715.40 acres of Khasland between March 2005 and February 2006 and distributed it to 1116 landless people through temporary settlement. Permanent settlement was given to 256 persons. As a continuation of this effort from 2006 March to February 2007 a total of 2170.71 acres of Khas land were recovered and distributed to 3053 families.

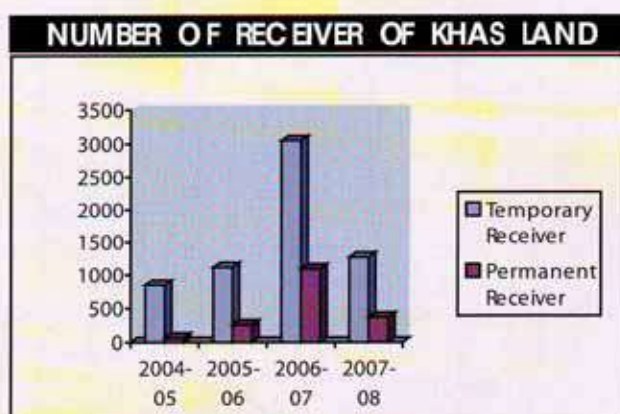


Figure 1

This whole programme was coordinated by the Upazila Khas land Distribution and Management Committee. They identified Khas land, recovered it from land grabbers, facilitated landless selection and distributed the land to them. Meetings, community mobilization, seminars, symposiums and workshops were organised to support this.



A great fighter for Life

Sufia, the daughter of Ansar Ali and Amena Khatun, erstwhile a wretched woman of Baburabad, is now a symbol of struggle and inspiration for the landless community in the southwest coastal region. The prolonged struggle she waged for survival has at last brought her ship of life to the harbor of peace and happiness. The daily hardship to make both ends meet is at last over. And now, she has found a shed over her head. She was landless- but she has now received a piece of govt. khasland with the assistance of Uttaran, a Non-govt. organization, and has become a proud owner of land as a potential source of household income. Now she has acquired enough strength to survive with dignity on receiving Khasland and registered deed of document, she has now become self-reliant.

Gambling made her father Ansar Ali totally impoverished. He sold everything, even the last shed over their head. At one stage Ansar Ali migrated to Norarchowk. Then Sufia was only four year old. She did not get any opportunity for schooling. She started working as a house- made at the age of only seven. Her childhood was spent amidst extreme poverty, distress and miseries. She started working as a wage labour at the age of fourteen. She fought her battle for survival all the time against odds and obstacles right from the age of 6-22.

Her married life was not happy either, as she had another co-wife. She has a daughter aged 5. Her name is Asia. Asia is now the only dream for survival of her mother. Sufia still bears the scars of struggle for khasland all over her body. The scars created by the bullets that hit her during the movement against the land-grabbers and the police forces, bears the testimony to her courage and heroism.

In 1995, she along with her other brothers came back to Baburabad. In 1998, the land grabbers in collaboration with police administration unleashed a fierce attack on the landless and the landless fought back in self-defense. Uttaran came forward in support of land rights for the landless community. Uttaran made arrangement for treatment of the injured and shelters for the homeless. Sufia was then fighting side by side with Jaeda who was subsequently killed by police firing. The death of Jaeda added a new dimension to the landless struggle for khasland. Sufia participated in almost all movements for khasland.

From 1998 to 2006 Sufia stuck to the landless habitats just for a piece of land. Uttaran extended all out support for identification of landless households, making list of genuine landless, preparing and handing over of deed of registration and possession of khasland to the landless. Uttaran also helped directly or indirectly in poverty alleviation of the landless community. Sufia got the possession of .70 acre of khasland in Beel Kajla mouja khas khatian no.1; plot no. 66,109 and 110 with the help of Uttaran in 2006. There was the time when Sufia had to beg from door to door just for a handful of rice or a pale of liquid rice residue (Bengali name-Maar). Now on a receipt of the registered deed, Sufia has built up a house on this plot of land. She is now cultivating shrimp in .50 acre of govt. khas water body. She now lives together with her brother, old sick father and only her daughter Asia. She has planted papaw and many other varieties in her courtyard.

Sufia, herself did not get any opportunity for schooling but has got her daughter admitted in the school. Asia reads in class I in Atshata Bigha Primary School. She also received an interest free loan amounting TK. 5,000 for repairing embankment of shrimp enclosure and cultivation of shrimp. Govt. khasland has transformed her life. She works in the shrimp gher herself. She performed all the works ranging from harvest to marketing. Besides, she also utilizes her leisure time to work as a wage labor for extra income. She can make some savings to secure the future of her daughter. She purchases rice for monthly consumption from the profit she made from the shrimp gher. She rears goat and cows in her homestead. She herself goes to the hospital for treatment and also advices her neighbor to do the same. She has constructed a sanitary latrine in her house. She is now free from tension for earning her daily bread. Now, they regularly take meals 3 times a day. Vegetables, fishes and sometimes meat constitute a menu in the daily food list. Eggs received from duck and hens also meet the daily nutrition of her households.

Now, Sufia is self-reliant. Just a piece of land and an ownership Dalil have totally changed the scenario of her life.

3. Capacity Development to Defend Human Rights

Uttaran builds the capacity of primary organisations and federations on human rights issues, focusing on the human and legal rights of each citizen irrespective of caste, religion or gender. The primary organisation selects an individual for their own organization to act as legal cadres. Uttaran has developed 1185 members of the primary organisations who now act as legal cadres and initiatives have been undertaken to develop more legal cadres. The cadres are knowledgeable on basic legal issues and are able to fill the role of a lawyer in their locality.

Legal cadres undergo 5 days training on different laws including family, criminal and civil laws. A team with institutional legal knowledge facilitates training activities. The contents of the training include: women and law; citizenship rights and human rights; generic land related laws; poverty; underdevelopment; civil administration and revenue policy; dispute resolution and mediation; gender equality; family violence; women and child trafficking; and acid violence. These cadres are capacitated to be vocal and courageous with good articulation and facilitation skills. They are developed to provide legal protection to disadvantaged communities and raise awareness of the legal process and human and civil rights.

In the weekly meetings, legal cadres raise the level of legal awareness among the members of the primary organisations. Under this activity, the male and female members of more than 1700 primary organisations have received training on primary legal issues. The members are taught about the adverse aspects of childhood marriage, unregistered marriage, divorce, birth registration, land law, dispute resolution and mediation, gender equity, human rights and justice, domestic violence and trafficking, attitudes towards untouchable persons and acid throwing prevention. As a result of the efforts of Uttaran the current rate of divorce among members of the primary organisations is lower than others. The legal cadres help to settle disputes between members of the primary organisations and also they took initiative to settle any type of dispute between primary organizations and community at large.

In 2007-2008 following types of training offered and the number of participants for each course is given below:

SN.	Training/workshop title	Number of participants
1.	Fundamental Human Rights	150
2.	Women and LAW	150
3	Common Interest Articulation	150
3.	Dispute resolution, Mediation & arbitration	120
4.	Gender Equity, Human Rights and Justice	120
5.	Ethnic Minority Rights	132
6.	Domestic Violence and Trafficking	40
7.	Land law	25
8.	Untouchability	25
9.	Justice	25

4. Alternative Dispute Resolution and Mediation

Uttaran tries to resolve compoundable disputes in the area through mediation, without the involvement of the formal courts. Because mediation works promptly it has become very popular among the community people, although the idea is not new in the rural Bangladesh. Dialogue based negotiation processes have traditionally been an important alternative to the courts for dispute resolution in our society and the system of Shalish has been in use for centuries. Uttaran has adopted a number of strategies to popularize the Shalish system again and to make it more dynamic in settling disputes.

There are Shalish Committees in all the villages of Uttaran's working area. Each committee has 7 to 10 members made up of leaders of Uttaran's primary organisations, schoolteachers, community leaders and other respected members of the community. More than half of the members of the Shalish Committees are women. The committee members are trained in arbitration skills and basic laws and are able to arbitrate and settle disputes. Hundreds of cases are now amicably settled outside of the courts. Over the last year 272 cases were resolved through Shalish.

5. Training and Fellowship Support for Journalists

In 2007-2008, Uttaran provided orientation to 100 journalists at the grassroots level and fellowship to ten journalists. The fellowship is awarded to newspaper and electronic media reporters to promote investigative reporting on Khas land, electoral and human rights, violation and sustainable water management issues and is three to four months in duration. The reports prepared by the journalist as a result of the fellowship are printed in their respective newspapers. The fellowships considerably sensitize the reporters and print media, keep the public informed of issue affecting their lives and encourage the public authorities to take appropriate decisions and actions.

6. Motivating Civil Society Organisations to Defend Human Rights

Uttaran has provided support to the civil society groups, different organisations and likeminded NGOs to organise and strengthened attempts to improve the human rights situation in the area. These organisations launch publicity campaigns to form opinion in case of any human rights violation. A network comprising of NGOs, civil society and socially based organisations has been developed to accelerate this programme. The network is called 'Network for Asserting Human Rights'. The network conducts public awareness activities to prevent women and child trafficking, domestic violence, acid violence and so on. Under this programme a massive mobilization was held last year in Tala Upazila.



7. Legal Support

It's a long and painful journey to establish human rights for the people. The ultra poor communities in the region are unable to form an effective movement to establish their rights. If any of them engage in movements designed to help them get out of vicious cycle of poverty, then individuals from the rural power structure file cases against them. If they are accused of a crime they often face high levels of police harassment. Filing a case in the courts is another method used in the rural areas to harass poor people who are trying to assert their rights. To protect common people from such kind of victimization and to establish their rights Uttaran implements a legal support programme. In the reporting year Uttaran provided legal assistance to 11 cases at higher court and to 232 cases to lower courts.

Story of Firoja Khatun

Firoja Khatun's father Lokman arranged her marriage when she was eighteen years old with Didarul shekh of Datpur village under Tala Thana in 2003.

Firoja's father is a day labourer and has no agricultural land except of his homestead in 2 decimal of land. The homestead use to submerge under water logging at least 6 months in a year. It is happening since last 2000. As a result he becomes vulnerability. He has three daughters. He is the only earning member of his family. He maintained his family very hardly.

Lokman felt little relax after marriage of her daughter. But unfortunately his daughter came back from her father-in-law's house after few days; because her husband started to torture mentally and physically for dowry. Didarul Shekh does not work. He passes his days with playing cards and watching movie. He borrowed money form others but does not repay.

By this time Firoja gave birth a son. She went out for work to maintain her family very hardly. But she did not found the love from her husband. After few days her husband left her with her son and got second marriage.



Firoja's mother is an active member of Uttaran's primary organization. She came to Uttaran Office and requested legal support for her daughter. After hearing this, Uttaran officials call Firoja's husband but he did not come. Then Lokman, father of Foroja filed a case against Didarul Islam according to the suggestion from the local administration. Uttaran is providing legal aid support for this case. The Magistrate Court issued Saman to Firoja's husband.

8. Civic Awareness on Electoral Rights and Participation

A democratic voting system is essential for the sustainable development of a country. In this system the leader is elected by the people, of the people, for the people through a free and fair election with the participation of all eligible voters. Casting a vote according to the individual's choice is a fundamental right of the citizens of the country. Many voters of our country are not interested in casting their voting right and (or) do not go to the voting centre for many reasons. To strengthen the democratic process in society and develop this system in the country, Uttaran took part in awareness building among the voters so that they can elect their leader according to their choice without obstacles from anyone.

Voter registration is the first step for holding a credible election. The election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB) enhanced the voter list with photograph identification before having 9th National Parliamentary Election. Uttaran worked closely with the ECB and held awareness building initiatives in 86 Unions in 8 Upazila of 4 districts; Satkhira, Khulna, Jessore and Bagerhat. Uttaran had three different projects with three different donors. They were European Commission, CIDA and EWG (a network with 33 NGOs supported by The Asia Foundation). Uttaran implemented these projects with its 11 partner NGOs.

The most notable activities of the projects were:

a) Special meetings with the minority communities and out-reach communities. Many minority communities were always under pressure from different political parties to cast votes for their candidates. Sometimes they were threatened and became helpless and many had lost interest in registering their name for the voter list. Uttaran encouraged them to enjoy their right to vote for their own benefit. The out-reach people were not aware of the value of vote and Uttaran encouraged them to vote to help them with mainstreaming in society.

b) Meeting with disable persons. The society generally treats them as a burden and the disable were not aware of their voting rights. They were motivated to put their name on the voter list to enjoy their voting right.

c) Meeting with the youth. The youth were unaware about the value of the vote. They were educated and prepared to be a future voter, so they will be able to discharge their voting right for the establishment of a democratic system in the country.

d) Meeting with the media. Uttaran arranged meetings with the media and motivated them to publish election related news in their papers so that every concerned person can properly play their role Establishment of a Civil Society Committee. Uttaran established a Civil Society Committee with the UP Chairman, local leaders, local political leaders from all parties, teachers, religious leaders, journalists, lawyers, women, youths and NGO workers in every Union, Upazila and District. Upazila and district level Government Officials were the patron of the Committees. Uttaran provided technical support to the committees for their capacity building. The main tasks of the Committees were to keep their area free from election related violence before the election, on Election Day, and post Election Day.

Integrated Rural Empowerment and Development Programme

The Integrated Rural Empowerment and Development Programme of Uttaran is central to the organisation. Initially, the name of the programme was the Human Development Programme. The name was changed to Integrated Rural Empowerment and Development under the Strategic Development programme, 2006-2010. Focusing on the landless, women and the outcaste, the programme aims to alleviate poverty by helping these groups to access different organisations and by making marginalized people economically self-reliant.

The programme is implemented through formation and development of primary organisations and inter-organizational structure. The organised groups are addressed as primary organizations. The members of the primary organizations are trained in social and skill development training and joined in collective group actions. This develops their trust and self-confidence. The social development training includes awareness raising activities pertaining to gender issues, untouchability, social hierarchy, injustice, exploitation, land issue and sustainable water management issue. After providing skill development training, various income and employment generation activities are conducted for their economic development. It also focuses on economic activities like agriculture, poultry, milky cow rearing, livestock, fisheries, crab fattening, duck rearing, nursery development and other small entrepreneurs. The key activities performed under this program are: primary organisation building and capacity development; asset transfer and micro finance

1. Primary Organisation Building and Capacity Development

In rural Bangladesh most of the population are poor and landless. They have virtually no access to public resources and have no representation on the local elected bodies. As a result their participation in the decision-making process is quite low. In this context, Uttaran has been trying to encourage the formation of organisations of landless men and women and support them so that they can become an important actor in the rural power structure. Uttaran also aims to equip participants with the tools needed to deal with the social, environmental, health and economic challenges they face. To date, Uttaran has formed about 2293 primary organisations in the rural areas, out of which 1865 are women's organisations and 428 are men's organisations. The total membership of these groups is 44,693. Out of the total women and men constitutes 35,741 and 8952 respectively.

Uttaran primary organizations consist of 20 to 30 members including women, religious and ethnic minorities, dalit/untouchable, persons with disabilities and the landless. The extreme poor are given preference in the organisations. The primary organisations of Uttaran are run by documented rules and regulations. The admission of new members, internal elections, resolution of disputes and other decision-making activities are governed by rules and consensus. In general the members of the primary organisations belong to the 20-45 age group and a maximum of two persons (one female and one male) from one family are allowed to become members.

Weekly meetings of the primary organisations are held as per rules and according to the schedule prepared by the members. In these meetings various issues are discussed including gender equity, dynamics of Khasland distribution, local government elections, electoral rights, legal issues, health care, environment, climate change, water logging, fair wages, economic ventures, etc. Through the exchange of ideas and views the members get an opportunity to broaden their understanding of different social, political and economic issues to help them to deal with their problems and development issues.



One primary organization of Uttaran

Each primary organisation has a 5-member Executive Committee consists of Chairperson, Secretary/Leader, Cashier, Legal Cadre and Health Cadre. The role of the Executive Committee is to facilitate the running of the primary organisation. Members of the primary organisation form the Executive Committee through consensus or an election held every two years. This provision for elections helps to promote democratic norms and develop leadership skills. The Executive Committee selection process means that the leaders and the members of primary organisations acquire the skills needed to resolve internal and inter-organizational conflicts. They also exercise a critical role in the operation of local Shalish (traditional mediation).

Uttaran organises various types of training in order to develop these organisations. This training includes leadership and group management, gender and development, land law and management, legal literacy and law cadre development, pond fisheries, milky cow rearing, crab fattening, goat rearing, poultry rearing etc.

12 development centres facilitate the work of the primary organisations. Field organisers facilitate the operation and management of the primary organisations.

Overview of the working area:

District	Upazila	Union (number)	Village (number)	Centre
Satkhira	Tala	09	112	Jatpur, Patkelghata
	Satkhira Sadar	03	38	Satkhira Sadar
	Debhata	05	35	Debhata
	Assashuni	12	48	Assashuni
	Kaligonj	08	49	Kaligonj
	Shyamnagar	10	45	Shyamnagar & Munshiganj,
	Kolaroa	02	04	Soroshkhathi
Khulna	Dumuria	02	17	Chuknagar
	Paikgacha	08	34	Kapilmuni Paikgacha,
Jessore	Keshobpur	03	13	-
Total 03	10	62	395	12

1.1. Gono Unnayan Federation

The primary organisations of Uttaran operate under the supervision of our Development Centre/Area office to federations that intensify the activities of the groups and strengthen relationships among them. The federations play a vital role to create access and opportunities in public organisations and improving socio-economic conditions irrespective of sex, caste, ethnicity or religion

A two-tier management system has been introduced to develop suitable and strong activities. Uttaran also developed vertical networks at the Union and Upazila (Sub-district) levels to intensify the activities for the emancipation of landless and marginalized families. A total of 50 union Gono Unnayan Federations and 8 central Gono Unnayan Federations at Upazila level have already developed.

The federations are guided by set rules and regulations. A Governing body of federations at Union and Upazila levels is elected for two years by the representatives of each primary organisation and consists of 4 women, 5 men and 2 members from the outcaste. The main objectives of a federation are to:

- " Assess the activities of the primary organisations and to identify relevant problems;
- " Devise mechanisms to raise social movement/initiatives to deal with such issues; and
- " Guide the primary organization at village level.

In 2007-2008 the federations played a vital role in identifying Khasland, potential programme participants and settling disputes around Khasland in favour of the landless poor. They made serious appeals to the Government of Bangladesh for the immediate release of the Uttaran director. The federation significantly increased understanding in the area on right-based issues like human and legal rights, gender and development, governance and ways to access local structure, land rights and Khasland issues, caste and untouchability issue, domestic violence and early marriage. They also developed their own capacity on development issues like effective leadership and facilitation, primary organization formation and management, minutes/report writing, resolution making and effective negotiation and communication. Over the last year, Uttaran helped the federations to strengthen their ability to claim and represent their fundamental rights and problems to government and other authorities like UPs and the Upazila administration.

2. Asset Transfer

Rights over and entitlement to resources is required to lift people out of poverty. Thus one of the areas of development, Uttaran focuses on is asset transfer to the poor people. Uttaran's asset transfer programme for the extreme poor can pave the way to extreme poverty reduction. The people are able to improve their livelihoods and income with the help of transferred asset. Uttaran is one of pioneer NGOs for scaling up the asset transfer concept in the development sector.

Uttaran has undertaken various initiatives to transfer social asset. A total of 973 families got asset support (like cow, goat, TW, house etc.) from Uttaran during this reporting period.

3. Land Transfer

According to the constitution of Bangladesh, the landless will receive Khas land. However, the landless people are deprived from that right. The land grabbers and influential people have occupied the Khasland. Uttaran believes that the transfer of Khas land to the poor people is essential to poverty alleviation. Unfortunately Uttaran alone cannot carry forward this activity. Hence, Uttaran along with like-minded organisations are working together to recover land from the land grabbers and settle court cases and disputes in favour of the poor people.

Uttaran is implementing this activity along with 10 organisations. A brief summary is presented below:

Associate organisation	Working Area		Settled Land (amount)		Beneficiary (no of families)	Financial Assistance (TK)
	District	Upazila	DCR	Permanent		
Rupali	Satkhira	Tala	557.36	19.96	856	9,44,590.00
Mukti Foundation	Satkhira	Tala	589.78	-	497	13,35,300.00
Polli Chetona	Satkhira	Assasuni	587.22	-	938	11,42,700.00
Ideal	Satkhira	Debhata	148.8	-	200	37,800.00
Nokshi Katha	Satkhira	Shamnagar	170.89	260	285	3,17,660.00
Sushilon	Satkhira	Kaligonj	22.24	-	71	69,000.00
Muktir Alo	Khulna	Paikgasa	190.6	66.66	361	2,52,000.00
Nari Unnoyon	Khulna	Paikgasa	334.29	29.52	390	7,08,320.00
SDO	Khulna	ikgasa	410.46	-	519	4,50,000.00
Bonophul	Khulna	Batiaghata	254.26	14.05	498	4,89,800.00
10 Organisations	2 Districts	7 Upazilas	3265.93	134.99	4615	57,47,170.00

Temporary Settlement

The associate organisations of Uttaran assisted to recover 677.08.40 acre of Khas land and distributed to 754 landless households through temporary settlement.

Permanent Settlement

The associate organisations of Uttaran assisted to recover 23.39 acre of Khas land and distributed to 59 landless households through permanent settlement.

Interest Free Capital Assistance

The associate organisations of Uttaran provided Tk. 1034957 interest free capital among 862 landless households.

4. Micro-finance, Savings and Credit

Uttaran facilitates micro finance activities among the organised group members to create work opportunities and make them economically self-reliant. Our main activities are: encouraging group savings for capital formation; developing revolving loan funds; and developing group and individual managerial and technical capacity through training.

4.1. Savings for Capital Accumulation

The poor in Bangladesh hardly have any savings, which they can use during a crisis. In this context, Uttaran motivates the poor to develop a habit of savings. Previously, in crisis situations, the poor had to borrow money from the rural moneylenders at a very high interest rate, which eventually rendered them totally destitute. Savings not only help them in emergencies but also help in increasing economic productivity. This also creates a sense of unity among the members. Previously, in crisis situations, the poor had to borrow money from the rural moneylenders at a very high interest rate, which eventually rendered them totally destitute.

The poor people also are saving regularly as per their capacity. Uttaran's primary organisation members have realized cumulative savings amount of Tk.17,205,993 till June 2008 under 12 development centres. They can utilize these savings to improve their standard of living, increase their income and to support themselves during a disaster.

4.2. Credit Programme for Income and Employment Generation

The adjacent chart illustrates the number of male and female borrowers. Increased income is a fundamental and important activity for the poor. To increase the income of the members of the primary organizations Uttaran has disbursed 3,69,84,340 crore taka micro-credit among the 10,919 Uttaran group members in 2007-08 financial year. Out of these 2087 are men and 8832 are female borrowers. Loan repayment rate is 98.73 %.

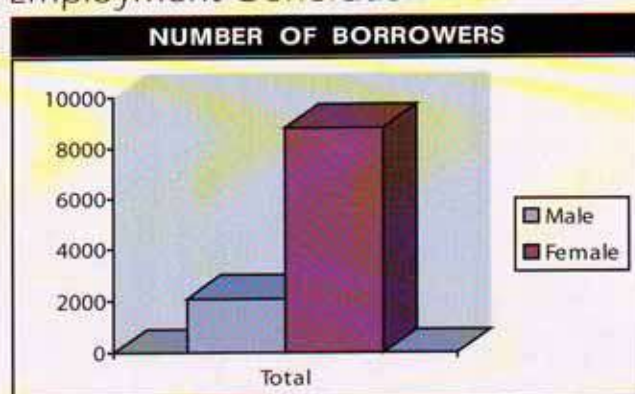


Figure 1

Loan Disbursement in Financial Year 2007-2008

No	Sector	Number of Borrower			Amount disbursed	Percentage of total amount disbursed
		Male	Female	Total		
1.	Agriculture	305	1220	1525	55,85,000	15 %
2.	Livestock	467	1868	2335	79,50,000	21 %
3.	Small Trading	340	1362	1702	65,72,380	18 %
4.	Handicrafts	221	1254	1475	50,15,000	13 %
5.	Fish Culture	225	849	1074	35,75,000	10 %
6.	Poultry	289	1090	1379	46,70,000	13 %
7.	Others	240	1189	1429	36,16,960	10 %
	Total	2087	8832	10919	3,69,84,340	100 %

Natural Resources Management and Disaster Risk Reduction Programme

The coastal areas of Bangladesh are different from the rest of the country because of the region's unique geo-physical characteristics and also because of the socio-economic and political challenges in the area that limit people's access to resources and perpetuate risk and vulnerability. Being a low-lying delta with most of its land barely above sea level, Bangladesh is under serious threat of losing a significant portion of its total landmass due to sea level rise and natural calamities are a regular phenomenon in Bangladesh. Floods, cyclones, tidal surges and so on harm the life and livelihood of the coastal area people. In recent times disasters of this kind are occurring more frequently and severely. In addition, vast areas of Jessore, Satkhira and Khulna districts are submerged under water due to persistent water logging crisis in the area, which has made 1 million people in those areas marooned. The situation is further worsening as the mentioned districts are geographically located in the down part of Bangladesh and the rain and flash water flows to these areas from the upper part is poorly navigated or stagnated because the drainage system of the rivers have become blocked by sediments. Every time a disaster hits these areas, the people have to live under very inhumane and substandard conditions, making them vulnerable to infectious diseases due to poor health and sanitation. Potable water sources are either absent or contaminated. They get minimal support from both government and private sectors. Men and women are facing problems in terms of shelter, food, water, sanitation, public health, fodder, employment, etc. Climate change may worsen this crisis in the near future. Uttaran is implementing several activities and programmes attuned to the context of the region and directed towards ensuring environmental protection and sustainable management.

1. Climate Change Adaptation

1.1 Action Research and Development of Alternative Livelihood

The southwest region of Bangladesh is different in many ways from the rest of Bangladesh as the vast areas are considered as tidal wetland. More than 80% of the people are extreme poor. The region's economy is based on agricultural production, which is the dominant source of life and livelihood of the people of this area. Life and livelihood patterns among the people of the region are shaped by its geo-morphological and ecological vulnerability considerations and climatic changes. The harmful effects of the climate change have increased the vulnerability of the people. Uttaran is implementing several pilot activities to build a vulnerability free life and make them hopeful.

1.2 Research on Integrated Agriculture Management

Uttaran has undertaken research on eco-friendly farming systems to develop the adaptation capacity and agriculture productivity of the people of this area. This is being piloted in 5 unions (Parulia, Shakhipur, Noapara, Debhata, and Kulia) all under Debhata Upazila of Satkhira district. The action research has 50 farmers as direct participants, of which 7 are women and 43 are men. This activity is being implemented across 13 Bhigha land.

1.3 Paddy, Fish and Prawn Poly Culture

As a part of a pilot activity paddy, fish, prawn and vegetable are being cultivated on a same land. The group members generally prepare 1.5 acres of plot with enough space for fish and prawn movement using a canal system. Consequently, during the dry season, when the water level is reduced, water is available in the adjacent drain. This creates safety for the fish and prawn cultivation whilst the farmers grow vegetables on the bank of the land. A marginal farmer can grow paddy and vegetable and at the same time cultivate fish and prawn using this system.

1.4 Reed and Fish Culture

This action research is also implemented on 1.5 acres of plot. The plot has been prepared to allow reed production on the land and fish production in the canals. The process was that reed plants were transplanted while fish fingerlings were stocked in the canal at the same time. The people of this area have started following this farming system. Cultivation of reed is an old tradition in the area and people are habituated to the practice meaning they have learned this system easily. They are now producing reed and fish and benefiting economically.

1.5 Crab Cultivation

To bring back the farmers from the practice of shrimp based monoculture Uttaran has initiated crab cultivation and fattening. Crab cultivation is undertaken on a pilot basis in a pond of 15 to 1.5 acres. Within a short time a crab can rapidly grow. A crab grows from 100 gm to 250 gm within three months after the preparation of the land. A total of 1200 crab farmers of Debhata, Assasuni and Syamnagar Upazila under Satkhira district have been supported under this scheme. Another important aspect of crab cultivation is that poor farmers can also adopt this profession, as it requires only a small amount of land, less time and money in comparison to shrimp cultivation. The group we are targeting under this scheme is women who are involved with crab catching and cultivation but due economic insolvency are unable to cultivate and persons with less or no technical capacity. A total of 1200 crab farmers received training in 48 batches, 39 staff from Department of Fisheries (DoF) in two batches and one batch of 25 depot owners (exporter) were given training for 3 days each.

Uttaran also organised seminars and workshops and produced some publications. The publications included training modules, seminar papers, folders, brochures and guidelines on crab cultivation.

2. Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihood Development

This is a campaign programme, which is implementing in all over Bangladesh. More than 150 NGOs are involved in this network. The whole country is divided into eight regions in order to proper implementation of the programme. One of group is coastal area campaign group. This group is working from Syamnagar, Southwest part to Sent Martin Island, southeast part of Bangladesh. A total of 35 NGOs work under this group. Uttaran work as the lead organisation for this group. Basically, the campaign activities are implemented on the condition and position of the farmers due to climate change.

The members of this group are:

Ogrojatra (Chittagong), AOSED (Khulna), ASDO (Khulna), Avas (Barisal), Coastal Development Partnership (Khulna), Centre For Global Change (Dhaka), Dhrupod (Khulna), Environment Friendly Agriculture Development Foundation (Khulna), Humanity Watch (Khulna), Integrated Community Development Association (Barisal), Integrated Development Organization (Jessore), Institute Of Development Education For Advancement Of Landless (Satkhira), Integrated Social Development Effort (Chittagong), Issoripur Development Foundation (Satkhira), Jago Nari (Barguna), Jagroto Jubo Songho (Khulna), Kholifa Foundation (Barguna), Leaders (Satkhira), Loving Care For the Oppressed Society (Khulna), Muktir Alo (Khulna), Nazrul Smrity Songsod (Barguna), Network On Climate Change Bangladesh, Polli Punorgothon Club (Pirojpur), Pirojpur Gono Unnoyon Somiti (Pirojpur), Participatory Research & Action Network (Noakhali), Prottoy (Cox's Bazar), Prodipon (Khulna), Progoti (Satkhira), Rupayan (Khulna), Social Advance Community Organization (Barguna), Somaj Progoti Songstha (Khulna), Soddesh (Satkhira), Sapla Ful Social Development Organization (Patuakhali), Uddam Somaj Kallan Sangstha (Barguna) & Uttaran.

3. Sustainable Water Resources Management

Waterlogging has brought tremendous agony to the communities of Satkhira and Jessore districts and the situation is worsening day by day. Uttaran has been working with the people to improve the situation. However, Uttaran alone cannot handle an environmental crisis like water logging and State intervention is required to solve the crisis. Uttaran is engaged in mass awareness creation through meeting-mobilization and is also collecting and preserving information about the crisis. Uttaran has concentrated on building relationships with the media to publicise this ongoing environmental disaster. Uttaran is also implementing socially based disaster risk reduction and management activities. Vulnerability assessments have been organised by us using participatory process to understand the severity of the situation. Uttaran is continuing to provide training and capacity building services to make people better able to plan for and face disaster.

Uttaran has been working on this issue for a long time and is very experienced. We understand the challenges around natural vulnerabilities and the broader context such as the mal governance in the name of infrastructural development and promotion of economic activities that brings foreign investment into the region without considering the environmental and socio-economic impact. Uttaran believes in sustainable development which means that natural resources land, water, soil, plants and animals should be used or managed in a way that focuses on maintaining a good quality of life for both present and future generations. Uttaran is therefore undertaking advocacy, research and capacity-building activities to ensure the use of natural resource helps to reduce the risk and vulnerability of the people and area.

4. Community Based River Basin Management

An environmental and humanitarian disaster is unfolding in the southwest coastal region of Bangladesh. More than a million people (directly and indirectly) are going through an annual ordeal of extreme suffering caused by inundation of hundreds of thousands of hectares of land by stagnant water for 6/7 months each year. This annual flooding, known as water-logging, unleashing a social and environmental disaster in the region, is a result of decades of mismanagement of the river system in the region. Mitigating the crisis and finding a long-term solution requires going beyond the usual emergency response and relief, towards a concerted effort to reduce the causes.

The genealogy of the crisis goes a long way, back to nineteen sixties. One of the major donors driven development intervention, Coastal Embankment Project (CEP) was initiated during the 1960s as a technical solution to protect approximately 8600 square kilometres of land area in the southwest coastal region of Bangladesh from high tide. The Coastal Embankment Projects (with a series of follow-up and maintenance projects) intended to enhance agricultural production, deploying "green revolution" paradigm prevalent in the development discourses at that time. The techno-engineering solutions intended to achieve the goal by converting the wetlands into drylands, with construction of a vast network of embankments, sluice gates, regulators and polders. CEP imposed a "scientific" water management model, developed in the west, on the fragile ecosystem of the coastal areas in southwest Bangladesh. The underlying discourses of the model were to control the nature. It viewed water as an economic resource to be harnessed for development. It was a radical shift from traditional practices embedded in community practices, indigenous knowledge system and culture.

Although short-term gains were achieved in the form of enhanced agricultural production, primarily high yielding variety (HYV) rice, the long-term effects were disastrous. For instance, the embankments, sluice gates and regulators prevented the natural flow of rivers and disconnected the rivers from the basin and wetlands and disrupted the indigenous sediment management practices developed by the communities over the years. This led to massive water-logging of once agricultural lands. Inundating several hundred thousand hectares of land for up to 6/7 months each year, for the last one and a half decade. Increase in salinity also had devastating effects on farming communities who rely on low levels of salinity for rice production, eroded people's livelihoods and biodiversity. One of the casualties was indigenous fish population. Sluice gates and regulators disrupted the migration patterns of indigenous fish species and spawning ground. Another impact was intensification of conflicts over access to natural resources as CEP intervention drastically changed the natural resources management practices, generating stakeholder conflict over access to common property resources. The most alarming is that water-logging is gradually spreading to more areas. If urgent actions are not taken, this recurrent disaster will unleash a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented scale.

In the early nineties, yet another technical project was launched in the region, Khulna-Jessore Drainage Rehabilitation Project (KJDRP), to mitigate the water-logging crisis that was caused by its predecessors, Coastal Embankment Projects (CEP). At the cost of \$46 million, funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), this project began to reconstruct embankments with 'improved' regulators. It was another techno-engineering project with bulk of the expenditure going to construction. Local communities mounted a massive movement against the project, leading to the delay of implementation of the project by the executing agency, the Bangladesh Water Development Bank (BWDB). Uttaran supported all forms of local peoples' movements from the onset and it continues. Paani Committee, a community forum established in 1989 and facilitated by Uttaran since then, engaged in the project consultation process and negotiated their way to insert the concept of Tidal River Management (TRM) into project design. TRM is a concept derived and bricolaged from communities' age-old practice of sediment management, deeply embedded in indigenous ecological knowledge system, blended with "modern" water science

4.1 Campaign for Community Participation in Water Resource Management

Operationalizing the indigenous concepts of river management into concrete practice with meaningful community participation in all stages of implementation of government flood control, drainage and irrigation projects remains more a far cry. Authorities' most often to stick to their construction-based techno-fix and inability to understand the efficacies of ecological knowledge of the communities. Indigenous knowledge and practice like Tidal River Management (TRM) has been accepted within the broader national policy framework and by the donor agencies. For instance, PRSP recognizes TRM. BWDB still remains stubborn, and does not allow the communities adequate spaces to take part in decision-making process. Uttaran and Paani Committee successfully advocated for formation of a multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) in southwest for water resource management. But the formation process is driven by BWDB, an institution bureaucratic to the core, and more work is needed to make MSF an effective forum where stakeholders, especially local communities, can take part in real decision-making instead of the usual cosmetic participation.

Uttaran and Paani Committee further feel the need to go beyond the box and develop a long-term plan of action with regional perspective. Shifting the engagement modalities from reacting to projects towards a more pro-active role, capitalizing the negotiated approach mastered over the decade. A real participatory system can work only if local communities, beneficiaries in the language of policy makers, are not viewed as passive recipients of projects but allowed adequate structural and policy spaces to develop and come up with their own options and proposals.



28 January, 2008 Uttaran and Paani Committee organized a seminar to form multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) where ADB representatives and Water Development representatives were participated

5. Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction

Every year for a certain period of time large parts of Satkhira and Jessore are flooded. This places the people in an extremely vulnerable situation. People are compelled to leave home and take shelter in high land/street/school/colleges. Uttaran has implemented a project to assist people in reducing disaster risk and managing their lives by preparing them to face any calamities. Uttaran have found that most Upazilas in the districts of Satkhira and Jessore have no plan, preventive measures or mitigation initiatives relating to disaster management. Uttaran identified the disaster risk prone areas as an output of the project and formed disaster risk management committees consisting of flood affected people, government officials and representatives of civil society.

The poor people suffer most as a result of the waterlogging. They lose their employment, social security breaks down and water born diseases spread. The women and children in particular are very vulnerable. Uttaran is implementing a project with the support of OXFAM-GB to reduce the risks facing these poor communities.

Under this project Uttaran carried out an assessment on climate change related problems among 800 students of 40 primary schools under Tala Upazila, using the snake-ladder game as an assessment tool. The students were made aware of necessary measures and precautions that can help during a crisis. They were made aware of pre, during and post disaster related activities. A total of 50 women and men were trained on disaster risk reduction. A total of 25 people were trained including the chairman and member of the disaster risk reduction committees of five unions under Tala Upazila. The committee made a comprehensive plan on mitigating health problems during disaster and utilizing emergency stores developed under the project. A total of 1600 packets of oral saline, umbrella, raincoat, alarm, first aid box and bleaching powder were distributed.

A total of 1559 women were given directions on reproductive health care, health tips and nutrition through courtyard meetings. To solve malnutrition problems they are involved in homestead gardening, rearing livestock and poultry, which also benefited them economically. In addition, various national and international days were observed to make people aware of disaster issues. Around 2000 people participated in a colourful rally on the eve of the national sanitation programme.

5a Formation of Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) Committees

DRRM Committees have been formed and/or reactivated at village, union, Upazilla, pouroshava and district level. The committees comprise of the government officials, UP members, social workers, NGO workers, teachers, religious leaders, political leaders, journalists, youths and students. There are 30-35 members in each committee, incorporating both male and female members. The Committees sit once a month to discuss disaster risk reduction management in their area and to plan for future disasters. The planning focuses on how to make the local communities less vulnerable to future disasters. Uttaran provided technical support to the committees to build their capacity and to improve their understanding of risk management.

5b Capacity Building of DRR Members and Volunteers

Uttaran facilitated training for committee members and volunteers on DRR to build their capacity; a cascade approach was used meaning learning was shared with the wider community. Meetings and workshops were arranged with the stakeholders on DRR in Upazila and district level. Savings money, storage food, firewood, matches and fodder, flood resistant house building, raising homestead, latrine and platform of the tube wells above flood level were discussed in the meetings and workshops.



Disaster Risk Management training for volunteer of Tala and Kolaroa upazila under Satkhira district

5c Income Generation

The distressed women were given two days training on homestead gardening and goat rearing. After receiving training women are given vegetable seeds and fertilizer and a female goat to help them with their income generation activities. These initiatives increased their income and savings and helped them to meet their needs during disaster.

5d Awareness Raising

For building awareness on DRR Uttaran produced posters, leaflets, billboard and IEC materials. Approximately 300 participants participated in a daylong awareness campaign and discussion; we helped participants understand the reasons for water logging and flooding in the area and the preparatory actions they could take to lessen the impact. The event created an opportunity for dialogue between the community and the government administration, enabling the people to demand a solution to the waterlogging problem in the area.

5e Advocacy

Uttaran engaged with key actors such as civil society, Upazila and district administration to take up the flood and water logging issue of ensuring sustainable disaster management for the region. Uttaran supplemented this activity with continuous publicity and media campaigns, intensive persuasion work and lobbying to push for the adoption of peoples' alternative option for sustainable disaster management and an adaptation strategy, and mobilization to promote grassroots agenda and ensure media coverage.

5f Institution Building and Input Support

Uttaran formed 30 Village Disaster Management Committees, 40 Union Disaster Management Committees (UDMC), four Upazila Disaster Management Committees, one Pouroshava Committee and one District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) in Satkhira district. All the committees were very active, arranging their meetings regularly and trying to take action to reduce the problems faced by people in the area. The committee lobbied the relevant authorities to take necessary measures like VGF cards distribution, food/cash for work, road repairing and construction, earth raising activities, tube well repairing and installation and supplying sanitary latrine materials.

The initiative has contributed to the development of disaster preparedness knowledge of all the committee members and the local communities. This is helping to reduce the risk to lives and assets.

Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods

Severe food insecurity persists in the southwest region of the country. In response to this, Uttaran is implementing food security and sustainable livelihood activities in 72 villages of seven unions of Tala Upazila under Satkhira district designed to motivate people to develop their own food security capabilities. Understanding people's thinking and involving them in planning process enhance the efficacy to implement the activities. Initially, a base line survey is conducted in a participatory manner to understand the local situation. During this process, basic production related information of the locality and the reasons for food insecurity are identified. The villagers and the primary group members produce a production map of the locality through a need assessment and the purpose of this is to remove obstacles to food security. The planning is done on the basis of felt necessity. The members get a clear picture on their condition and position and sources of food.

1. Crop Rotation

As a system to increase food production, crop rotation brings more positive results than monoculture. A total of 111 farmers of 63 groups cultivated a high yielding variety of paddy on a pilot basis and 781 farmers of 138 groups preserved the seed of the paddy. They received positive result out of it. Under the crop rotation system the integrated pest management system (IPM) is followed to control pests instead of chemical pesticide. A total of 3736 group members of 178 groups cultivated vegetables in their courtyard. Apart from that 3521 group members set up poultry and livestock farms to increase their asset and income that consolidated their food security. Uttaran is playing a vital role in improving farmer's food security situation through facilitating intensive fish and paddy production.

2. Homestead Nursery through Improving Management System

For a number of reasons various types of valuable trees are becoming extinct in the southwest part of Bangladesh. Homestead nursery through improving management system is a key activity of Uttaran to preserve the valuable trees in order to develop economic situation of the poor. This activity has been started in three unions of Tala Upazila and all members of the three Upazilas are involved with the activities. A similar project was implemented in three unions of Kaliganj Upazila. Under this project initiative has taken to preserve nearly extinct fruits and medicinal tree such as Koromcha, a nearly extinct medicinal fruit.



Homestead Nursery

Democratization and Good Governance

There are many formal structures of democracy in Bangladesh, but most of them function in an undemocratic manner with very limited transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and openness to public input. The local government continues to remain an extension of the central government, which also stifles effective governance and local democratic participation. Our strategies to improve governance cut across all of our current initiatives. Central to these strategies is our belief that to promote good governance and democratization it is necessary to sensitise UP participants. We encourage NGOs and civil society to contribute to changing the current role of the UPs to make them more democratic, responsive and transparent institutions.

In this reporting period, Uttaran has been implemented training on: responsive governance; gender base governance; mediation; the UP manual and Act; gender and development; women and child rights; participatory impact monitoring; Art of advocacy; and responsive governance. We have also organised workshops on local resource mobilization, incorporation of social issues in the UPs plan and freedom from external influences of UPs,

Other activities we have been involved included observing the relevant international days and submitting Memorandum to legal authorities, and organising press conferences on social issues and challenges concerning governance and local government. In this reporting period we reactivated and regulated the activities of District Legal Aid Committee and Village court, facilitating regular meetings, sharing sessions, public hearing at UP levels and ensuring continuing support to the victims to enable them to carry forward their court case.

Also Uttaran has facilitated the formation and strengthening of Standing Committee through a series of meetings at different levels and facilitating workshops on various themes on democratization and good governance. The process has increased understanding on various issues and their underlying implications such as the environment, climate change, gender, Khasland recovery, women and child trafficking, quality primary education and water and sanitation.

1. UP Capacity Building and Strengthening

Uttaran recognizes that strong collaboration with local government, especially the UPs, could enhance local institutional processes and create a better understanding of development issues and democratic values. Ultimately it can contribute towards the reformation agenda of the UPs to act as independent, grassroots and pro-people organisations. Uttaran acknowledges that NGOs and civil society have an important role to play through proactive interventions with the UPs.

Uttaran has been actively involved in the capacity building of UPs. To develop capacity of the members there is a manual on roles and responsibilities of a UP. However, the new members of the UPs are often not aware of their roles and responsibilities or the manual. Uttaran has taken initiatives to disseminate information about the manual amongst newly elected members and the community. The UP members were informed about their role and responsibilities according to the manual and resource mobilization at local level.



Uttaran organized one sharing meeting with Noapara Union Parishad

Elimination of gender discrimination is an important part of the process of improving governance. It is an ideological discussion but also an indication of the lack of resources and decision making opportunities available to women in our society. Training was organised for the UP members to promote gender responsive governance within the society.

A total of three workshops with two days duration were held for the elected UP members on good governance. 64 elected members participated in the workshops. In addition, three workshops on Shalish and village courts were held and in total 62 people attended the workshops.

Training activities on disaster management and risk reduction have been held in 47 unions of Satkhira and Faridpur districts to develop the capacity of the disaster management committee. A total of 1529 participated in the workshops including elected representatives, local level government officials, teachers, NGO staff and freedom fighters.

2. Partnership on Rights-Based Initiatives

Uttaran is working closely with 52 UPs to establish the rights of women, children and excluded groups. Our current initiatives are: elimination of gender based discrimination; ending domestic violence against women; campaigning against child marriage; campaigning against dowry; awareness activities on women and children rights; health and sanitation; and landless rights to land. Domestic violence has been reduced due to this partnership. During the reporting period a total of 120 UP members participated in the training course on gender equity and 40 members participated in the courses on domestic violence against women.

3. Promoting Gender Responsive Governance

Women's empowerment and gender equity are essential factors for sustainable development. Bangladesh has made progress in this regard through the Government's strong commitment to advance social and economic improvements amongst women and children. However, it needs continuous efforts and political will to establish a gender just society. Uttaran is motivating and mobilizing people to increase women's participation at the local government level. The key activities we are engaged in are publicity, campaigning, and organising meetings and roundtables.



Training on Gender Issue

4. Mass Awareness and Media Campaign for Good Governance

This initiative has been undertaken in order to intensify community awareness and broaden public support for women's empowerment and good governance. A journalist is awarded a fellowship as a part of this activity. Under this fellowship the journalist prepare reports on violence against women. To support this, 1,000 posters on wage inequality between men and women were published. More than 30,000 men and women of 392 villages of 52 unions in Satkhira, Khulna and Jessore districts were covered by this activity.

Uttaran is implementing multiple programmes in partnership with likeminded organisations. The programmes include:

5. Voter Awareness Programme

Working in partnership with 14 partner organisations, Uttaran implemented the voter awareness programme to create awareness among voters of the need to vote in the national parliamentary election. Uttaran as a member of the Election Working Group (EWG) performed a lead role of the 14 organisations. Uttaran and the 14 organisations were also



Uttaran organized one rally with its 14 partner organizations

Health Programme

In the absence of physical and financial resources, health is often the sole capital available to the poor communities. However, due to malnutrition and a lack of access to safe drinking water they suffer from various kinds of diseases. To improve health situation, Uttaran believe in prevention is better than cure. However, the service providers including the government run hospitals and health centres at union and Upazila levels ignore preventive aspects of health care. Uttaran recognised the need to devise a preventive health care programme to provide health services to the poor communities and to raise their general awareness about preventive health care. The impact of this would be a reduction in the child mortality rate and an increase in the average life expectancy of the population. Since 1986, Uttaran has been implementing health programmes.

1. Health and Hygiene Education

Our health education programme aims to establish a preventive health care system instead of a curative one. The underlying philosophy of the programme is 'prevention is better than cure'. Uttaran selects an individual from among the primary organization members to act as Health Cadre and provides training to develop their primary health care capacity. Health Cadres, discuss the skills they have acquired and share ideas with other primary organization during the weekly meetings of the primary organisations. Through this process other members learn the basic skills of preventive health and hygiene care. The critical health information supports them to keep away from common diseases. At present 30,160 women and men have received primary health and hygiene care education and 24,307 of this total are women. The training includes nutrition and health rules; mother and child health; family planning; safe drinking water and sanitation; and personal health care.

2. Eye Care and Prevention of Childhood Blindness

The incidence of eye related diseases is high among the children of southwest Bangladesh and as a consequence childhood blindness is increasing. Uttaran was able to cure more than 5,000 children from eye related diseases with the support of Sight Savers International project. The activities under this programme include: arrange diagnosis of all the blind children to screen out cataract cases and arrange surgery of all cataract cases including necessary follow-up visits. In the last year, Uttaran saved more than 300 children from blindness through cataract surgery. This surgery arranged by Uttaran in collaboration with Khulna BNSB hospital. Uttaran implemented this programme with the support of 31 partner NGOs, beginning in September 2005 and ending in December 2008. During the reporting period Uttaran implemented the project in Satkhira, Jessore, Kushtia and Khulna districts.

Uttaran with the assistance of associate organisations arranged the diagnosis of children to screen out cataract cases and surgery of all cataract cases in Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Jessore, Jhinaidhoho, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Kustia and Narail districts. The associate organisations identified children with cataract by organising diagnosis camps. After identification Uttaran arranged surgery of all cataract cases and any necessary follow up visits. Under this programme a total of 5402 children received support and 335 cataract

Associate organisation	Working Area (District)	Beneficiary
Badhon Manob Unnoyon	Bagerhat	352
Brothers Union	Bagerhat	156
PKS	Bagerhat	268
PNF	Bagerhat	128
Udoyon	Bagerhat	155
RMKS	Khulna	194
ARA	Satkhira	41
NZ Foundation	Satkhira	301
Sonar Bangla	Satkhira	72
DMPK	Norail	155
MKS & CEDF	Norail	295
Nova	Norail	288
ARC	Jessore	43
Apon	Jessore	64
MJKS	Jessore	119
Dabi Foundation	Jessore	48
Rural Vision	Meherpur	351
MKS	Meherpur	103
CURD	Meherpur	202
Alap	Chundanga	278
Sojak & Alap	Chundanga	296
Adarsha	Chundanga	92
Warp & CMKS	Chundanga	326
Protidan	Jhinaidah	101
Roots	Kushtia	68
Dop pasa	Kushtia	34
Seba	Kushtia	27
Alo	Kushtia	202
Nikusimaj	Kushtia	40
KRDO	Kushtia	157
Uttaran	Satkhira, Jessore & Khulna	446
Total = 31	9	5402

3. Community Based Sanitation Programme

The Bangladesh Government has said that the nation will achieve 100 per cent sanitation by 2015. But the actual achievements so far have not been able to match the indicators for this target. NGOs, local government administration, LGI and civil society at large have been involved in installing latrines. Some Upazilas (sub district) and districts have declared coverage of 100 per cent sanitation but behavioural change related to sanitation has not taken place. Most poor people still use open ground for defecation that often causes health problems like diarrhoea, dysentery, typhoid and other water borne diseases. Uttaran is implementing this programme to reduce the levels of these diseases. A massive programme has been undertaken to establish sanitary latrines in the households of 44,693 primary organization members organised by Uttaran. Also, Uttaran is calling on Upazila and

union level administration to implement awareness programmes. Uttaran also provided technical and financial support to Union Parishad and Upazila Parishad making 100 per cent sanitation coverage and sustaining the coverage. During the reporting period, a total of 136,363 persons of 27,272 families received sanitation support from Uttaran.

4. Access to Safe Drinking Water

The southwest of Bangladesh has limited access to safe drinking water due of excessive shrimp farming, salt-water intrusions, lack of sweet water aquifer and arsenic contamination of groundwater. People have to buy water, which is beyond the reach of most poor households, or fetch water from distant sources that are not always 100% safe because of the spread of arsenic contamination and saline intrusion in the area. Women are the worst affected of the situation because they are forced to collect safe drinking water for household consumption.

The communities of southwest Bangladesh have been using pond sand filter water as drinking water because there is scarcity of water from both shallow and deep tube-well. Uttaran has been involved in the issue from its founding and is currently implementing a rain water harvesting programme so that rain water can be used for drinking along with the pond sand filter water. Policy advocacy to solve water crisis is another activity of Uttaran. It will take a great deal of effort and resources to solve the crisis and the local communities cannot do this on their own, the government must provide assistance. Uttaran's water committee is working to achieve this.

The Paani/Water Committee organises the communities so that they can use their local knowledge to identify and develop a sustainable water resource management system and that can solve the water crisis. The Paani Committee also organises seminars and symposiums to influence national and international decision makers. In 2008, the committee facilitated media campaigns and coordinated meetings with the senior management of the local administration on the severity of water crisis of 292 villages at 33 unions of 8 Upazila under Satkhira, Khulna and Jessore district.



Scarcity of safe drinking water is a big challenge for the people of southwest region of Bangladesh

Education Programme

Uttaran believes that education is an important catalyst to social transformation. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees free and compulsory education to every citizen but a large section of people are deprived of their right to education, in particular the extreme poor, ethnic minority, women of female headed households. In this context, Uttaran began initiating education programmes in 1985 through the establishment of a secondary level school and has since then gradually scaled up its education programme for marginalized, outcaste and untouchable community. At present Uttaran provides educational support to children, young people and adults.

1. Innovative Primary Education Programme (IPEP)

The programme aims to create opportunities for the underprivileged children to help them access the education system. The IPEP schools have certain key principles that underpinned their methods. These principles are based on the philosophy that children who only listen quickly forget, children who see can remember, but children who do can understand. This philosophy can be seen in action in our schools as children learn through being involved and are encouraged to ask questions and express ideas and opinions. Wherever possible, the teachers plan the children's activities according to their ability so that the child's learning rather than the primer dictates the curriculum pace. The children's confidence has improved as a result and they spontaneously take part in many learning games that are a feature of the schools. Uttaran follows a two-fold approach in implementing its education programme: ensuring access to nursery classes and primary education from grade one to grade three. During the reporting period, a total of 240 children studied in nursery class in eight centres and 150 children in five centres or pre-primary schools. From the very beginning to till today, 10150 students were graduated from Uttaran run IPEP School. Uttaran uses its own education system in these centre/schools; the title of this model is Innovative Primary Education Programme (IPEP).

2. Child Education Sponsorship

This initiative is undertaken to ensure continuing education among the poor children who have been deprived due to acute poverty. Under this programme a sponsor supports every child's education until the child is 14 years old. In 2007-2008, 518 children being sponsored under this initiative. From the beginning to now, in total 849 students were sponsored through Uttaran's child education sponsorship project. The children also receive opportunities to participate in regular sports activities and receive coaching through 8 Shishu Milon Kendra (Child Unity Centre).



Students and teacher of Kulia Shishu Milon Kendra

3. Adult Education Programme through REFLECT and Loko Kendra

From 1997 Uttaran has been using REFLECT approach to adult literacy. The organisation follows this system to literate adults through LOKOKENDRA. REFLECT is a participatory learning process that encourages creativity, analytical discussion and problem solving relating to the situation of the participants' community. This empowers people and puts them at the centre of their learning, through the construction of locally generated graphs and diagrams that are used to define community power and relationships. After the basic 9-month course, participants are encouraged to continue their learning post literacy circles. These last for 1 year. These circles are based on the REFLECT system of action, reflection, action, with the intention of increasing the sustainability of learning. Reading and writing skills are further developed through the use of reading materials that supplement the graphs and diagrams. Training and orientation is given on issues such as human rights, democracy, gender, environment management, etc. After completing the REFLECT circles, the circles are integrated with the mainstream primary organisation and federation of Uttaran. The approach is appropriate to Uttaran's overall goal because it focuses on human development. In 2007-2008, a total of 250 persons studying in 10 circles. From the starting period to date, around 3600 persons studied in 144 circles.



Gender orientation in one REFLECT Circle

4. Formal Education

Uttaran is consistent in its commitment to provide education that is not just limited to an informal set-up but is also linked to the formal or mainstream education system. Under Uttaran's patronage and with our mentoring support, the following educational institutions are running: a primary school in a place called 'Atsota Bigha' at Debhata Upazila under Satkhira district; Shishutirtho Primary School at Tala, Samakal Madhyamik Bidyapith School at Jatpur, Tala; Shaheed Muktijodha College in Tala town. All of these educational institutions are governed and controlled according to the rules and regulations of the government. The education curriculum also is developed as per government rules. The library and learning of the targets are documented and shared according to the government rule. The institutions are as follows:

Shishutirtho Primary School

During the reporting period, a total of 204 students enrolled at Shishutirtho Primary School. From the very beginning to till to date, total enrolled so far 1877.

Samakal Madhyamik Bidyapith

In 1985, Uttaran's first education initiative was to establish this secondary school. Priority was given to the enrolment and to create equal opportunity for all students. In addition, students are given the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of development issues discrimination, exploitation, human rights, history of liberation, environmental issues, etc. The number of students was 535 during the reporting period and from the beginning to now, a total of 12492 students enrolled in this high school. Untouchable and outcaste, especially female students are enrolled on priority basis.



Students of Samakal Madhyamik Bidyapith

Shaheed Muktijodhya Mahabidylaya

Shaheed Muktijodhya Mahabidylaya is an eminent and reputed higher secondary and tertiary education institute in the region. The institute was established in 1994 as an intermediate college for conducting Higher Secondary Certificate Course (Grade 12) with the inspiration of a Japanese doctor named Dr. Nobukatsu Ishikawa and Italian Father Luigi Paggi, Uttaran, Proshika and CIDA's fund and the contribution of local community. In 2001, the college came out as a full-fledged education institute offering courses like Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS). The marginalized outcaste minorities, untouchables, women and landless students are getting special opportunity to complete their education. In each year, both in the higher secondary and tertiary education levels, 70 % of the students successfully passed, which is around 25-35% higher than the national level. The college authority supplements the government curriculum with the extra-curricular education including social issues such as discrimination, exploitation, human rights, history of liberation and environmental issues. The number of students was 457 during the reporting period and from the beginning to now, a total of 2747 students HSC and Degree classes.

Technical Education

Uttaran has established two technical schools, one at Chuknagar in Khulna District and the other at Parulia in Satkhira District, for people from poor communities who have dropped out of school during classes 6-10. In these schools students have the opportunity to learn a variety of skills, generally over a period of 6 months. For example, carpentry, mechanics, electronics, tailoring, and typewriting are all taught. Since 2007-2008, 76 students have completed several trade courses. About 86 per cent of these students are now employed in their chosen occupations. From starting to till to date, 1898 students have completed different trade courses and got job.

The institutions are governed and controlled according to the rules and regulations of the government. The education curriculum also is developed as per government rules. The library and learning of the targets are documented and shared through government rule. Uttaran has been facilitating the process of education in the institutions through easy teaching methods, infrastructural development and by increasing the quality and capacity of the teachers.

Library Activities

Uttaran's educational development activities are not limited to schools, we also encourage education and development among the whole population and to accelerate the initiative Uttaran is implementing its library related activities. There are two libraries in Tala and Chuknagar, which have more than four thousand books. In the libraries several newspapers are also available and hundreds of readers from the local communities regularly avail the facilities. The readers can even take books from the library for home reading.

In addition, Uttaran is engaged in community budget planning and audit education activities, mass planning, practice good initiatives of the development and traditional education system. The mass planning process is linked to local government system, whilst the good practices of the traditional education system are supported through our library related activities.

Relief and Rehabilitation Program

Southwest coastal region is one of the most disaster prone regions of Bangladesh. In November 2007 the region was again hit by cyclone SIDR. Experts have been warning that climate change would increase the frequency and intensity of cyclones and other natural disaster and southwest coastal region is on the frontlines of the climate change impact. Uttaran has decades of experience in disaster response.



Cyclone SIDR hit in Morelgonj upazila

1. Response to Cyclone SIDR

Cyclone 'SIDR' hit the coastal districts viz Pirojpur, Barguna, Barisal, Bagerhat, Khulna and Satkhira districts particularly in southern part of Bangladesh with full strength with an intensity of 240 kilometer per hour on November 15, 2007. Witnesses said the strong cyclone unleashed tidal surges from 5 to 6 feet height causing inundated the affected areas. The SIDR has utterly disrupted the area. The private sources even Red Cross Bangladesh demanded the casualties were around about 4000 people and many thousand people were missing. According to data from Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, over 92,000 hectares of crops were completely destroyed and over 5,51,000 hectares sustained partially damage. Livestock losses were also severe, with more than 350,000 ruminants (cattle, buffalo, sheep and goats) and poultry estimated to have been lost. Serious damage has been observed in the fisheries and shrimp aquaculture sectors. Maximum homestead fruit bearing plants as well as timber plants were uprooted. All communication and utility services were snapped. Thousands and thousands of houses were badly damaged and broken down. About 3,60,000 homeless people of the affected areas took shelter in schools, cyclone shelters, road sides, on the embankment and in open sky with making temporary shade, made of plastic sheet, leaves and branches of trees.



ECHO representative visited Telikhali village of Bhandaria upazila where Uttaran provided relief and rehabilitation support among SIDR affected people

As an organisation closest to the people, Uttaran always stands beside the disaster affected people and supports with their own fund. Apart from that, Uttaran facilitated vast programme with the assistance of donor organisation. Along with the immediate relief programme, Uttaran has undertaken various programmes to rehabilitate the affected people.

Uttaran operated relief activities in Morelganj, Shoronkhola and Kochua under Bagerhat district and Bhandaria and Mothbaria Upazila under Pirozpur Upazila. Uttaran distributed non-food items such as clothes for the children. We also arranged cash for work, sanitary latrine distribution, tube-well installation, boat and net distribution and seed distribution. After the natural disaster posters were published to ensure that proper health care and good sanitation practises were followed. The programmes were supported by Action Aid Bangladesh, Oxfam GB, CIDA, ILO, Trocaire Ireland, Misereor Germany, Tomo No Kai, JOCS, Dristipat and CARE Bangladesh.



A SIDR relief distribution event at Sharankhola where Ex Justice Nizamul Huq Nasim and Banister Sara Hossain participated

Uttaran worked for SIDR victims in Bhandaria, Motbaia upazilas of Pirozpor district and in Morrelganj, Mongla, Kachua, Sarankola upazilas of Bagerhat district. In these areas Uttaran has been distributing food and non food relief items including livestock, cleaning ponds, repairing roads, school premises, water points, carrying out installation of water points, sanitary latrine and bathing place, cash for work, support for carry out livelihood options. Uttaran also provided emergency food and non-food support to Patjati union of Goalganj district and Doblarchar Island of Bagerhat district. 45,078 households have received supports from Uttaran under its SIDR response projects.

Bangladesh reeling from SIDR cyclone 27 November 2007

In the 12 days since SIDR hit the south east coast of Bangladesh, relief has begun to arrive in some very devastated villages. Some 3,061 people have been killed, and over 1,000 are still missing. Many suspect the real casualty figure is much higher. Thousands more have been injured, and millions left homeless. But one of the most critical issues facing people here is water.

I visited Sharankola, in the hard hit Bagherat district on Sunday. Some 763 people are estimated to have died in this district alone. Sharankola, at least, has received some aid. Today one of Trocaire's partners, Uttaran, are distributing food, water, and clothes in this village. While the food is basic, what people here are really desperate for is clean water. There are a few shallow wells that provide "sweet" water-fresh water, as opposed to salt. Deeper wells can contain arsenic contamination, and deep aquifers are hard to reach, 1200 ft down and sealed in by layers of rock.



People are used to using surface ponds, which collect fresh rain water, for many of their water needs, but these have been polluted by fallen trees and debris, salt water, and in some cases, the human remains of SIDR victims. The water that surrounds houses and rice paddies is now foul, and smells to me like rotting fish. Even bathing in it can cause skin infections. Uttaran's medical team, which began seeing patients immediately following SIDR, is seeing many patients injured by falling trees, but also increasing numbers of patients with skin diseases from polluted water, and diarrhea. NGOs like Uttaran are trying to provide at least some water for drinking, while searching for a solution to clean the ponds.

In the mean time, winter, or aman approaches. It won't get much colder than 10° C, but people here have little in the way of shelter or warm clothing. Many houses were built with bamboo and thatch, others with wood and corrugated iron. Much of these materials are being salvaged and used to rebuild, in most cases, slightly dilapidated hovels. Shelter is a huge priority for people here, but of course, just one of many. Much of the rice crop was damaged, some of it destroyed by the storm surge, and the saline water that flooded the land. Estimates of livestock killed are in the hundreds of thousands. The capacity of people to access food is now severely impaired.

I met two small girls at a distribution; their families had cards and would receive a package of rice, lentils, salt, oil, water, and other small items. For a family of 6, it's only a 5 day ration. These girls attended school before SIDR, but their school building, made from mud and thatch, was destroyed by the storm. Now they will finish the school year in limbo, unable to take their end of year exams, perhaps unable to begin the next school year for many months. They're lucky. A woman breaks down crying as she sees me talk to them; her young daughter was their age, but was lost in the storm surge.

(Collected from Trocaire's website)

2. Response to Floods and Perennial Water-logging Crisis

Southwest coastal region faced devastating flood again. Flood affected the region in July 2007. The area is at down part of Bangladesh and flood and flash water from upper part flow to the Bay of Bengal through the revisers in this region. But the rivers have lost its navigation due to siltation in the basin of the rivers.

The rivers are being dried up day by day in the area. It is the effect of construction of embankments in the coastal belts in 1960s to protect the region from tidal surge and intrusion of saline water into the land. The floodwater from upper areas has been flowing in this part and it cannot drain out, so the new areas in the part have been affected by flood. Uttaran monitored the situation regularly and responded to the urgent needs of the community.

Three districts, Jessore, Khulna and Satkhira of southwest region have been affected by the water-logging problem more than 25 to 30 years. Government implemented a number of projects to resolve the problem but instead of mitigation this problem expanded, engulfing more areas. Major rivers of in the region are Kapotaksha, Betna, Morichap, Salta, Vodra, Horihor, Hamkura, Telegati, Ghengrail. Rapid siltation occurring among the rivers that lead water-logging problem that is reducing drainage capacity. Initially water-logging problem was in limited scale but last 7-8 years it created havoc and taking a disastrous form, human displacement became a common phenomena in these area. Water-logging problem in those region is very different from the flooding situation other parts of Bangladesh as water-logging persists 506 months uninterruptedly whereas flood in Bangladesh persists maximum one month. In this water-logging problem in Kapotaksha basin area going to take a severe situation.



Women and children are most affected by natural disaster

Road and Highways already inundated. People are leaving their homestead and taking shelter in the highways. Though rainy season is in the mid we do not know that will happen at the end of monsoon. Local leaders and local people apprehending that there be no demarcation of different basin areas, inundation of water will cross the boundary of embankments; water-logging situation will break the previous records. Most of the water-logging area located at the end of high tide, most of the silt deposited in that locations, river beds gradually silted up rapidly outstrike of embankment. Silt deposition builds up inside riverbed and riverbed become higher than the beel area. So drain out of surplus water from the beel area to river become difficult.

The opinion of local people about the causes of water-logging:

- Before polder silt were deposited inside beel area and during tide almost silt water discharges into the river with vigorous speed that maintain depth of river bed and land build up process in the beel area continued uninterruptedly. That is why before polder, there is no evidence of water-logging problem in these areas.
- There are large number of internal canal and river which is gradually captured by the influential people for fish farming that created drainage congestion in different area.
- The number and size of perennial water body increases day by day, as a result retention capacity of low-lying area became marginalized. a little rain fall and storm water over flow homesteads and roads.
- Run-off water of Northern area are increasing day by day that is frequency of flooding of northern area increases.
- Study shows that precipitation that is rainfall increases with time.

Uttaran's Shanjog Network members had been put on alert for emergency intervention. Uttaran mobilized volunteers to intervene the serious flood situation. Uttaran provided support to 5000 people. Support included emergency sanitation/latrine, latrine and tubewell installation, support to small traders to rejuvenate local economy, boat and fishing net distribution, livestock, cash for work to generate employment, seeds and other agri-inputs, house repair etc.

Skill Development

Uttaran believe that, overall development of the society is not possible without skilled development of people. In order to do that, Uttaran is developing an institute at Mobarakpur of Tala Upazila titled 'Institute for Development Research and Training' (IDRT). The institute would be a substitute for people oriented development. There is a library/resource centre at IDRT where updated information is available. The information can be accessed by Uttaran's workers and other the development organisations and staff working in the southwest. The centre includes a big hall room, two meeting rooms, three office rooms and a dormitory with modern facilities. There is accommodation for 50 persons in the dormitory.

In the reporting year a total of 50 meetings, 32 training sessions and three workshops held at IDRT. In addition 49 guests, seven visitors and five audit team members utilized the centre. A total of 5610 participants participated in the training courses offered at IDRT. Other than Uttaran, other organisation also utilized the centre for meetings, seminars, workshops and overnight stays.

The workers of Uttaran participate in training, seminars and workshops organised in both Bangladesh and abroad to help them to build and develop their capacity.

Also, different types of training are organised to create awareness and skill among the primary group members. The training courses are primarily divided into two categories, social development and skilled development. The social development trainings include leadership development and group management, gender and development, land laws and management legal education and develop legal cadre. To implement various income generating activities the organisation provides skilled develop training. During the reporting period 300 were trained in gender and development, 150 people on Gono Unnayan Federation Management, 150 people on Gono Unnayan Federation Management 270 on leadership development, leadership development 270 persons.

Name of the training	Batch	Participants
Gender and Development	30	300
Gono-Unnayan Federation Management	05	150
Leadership Development & Management	09	270
Land Law and Management	10	300
Legal Education	10	293
Refresher and Follow up	07	208
Fish culture	05	150
Goat Rearing	03	90
Cow fattening	03	90
Poultry	05	149

Uttaran is moving forward to promote the socio-economic development of the poor despite blows and many obstacles placed in its path. We have both supporters and opponents of our struggle to end injustice. Uttaran has become the bane of influential powerful land grabbers because of our role in the recovery and distribution of Khas lands and water bodies to the poor. Our work has meant that the landless poor now have a home of their own thanks to the transfer of assets and Khas land to them. We have applied for a project to DFID to scale up the Khas land transfer programme and we are confident that we will receive assistance in that project. If awarded, we will be able to accelerate the asset transfer process to the poor through Khas lands recovery and distribution.

It is known to all that Uttaran is working on water resource management to solve the water logging crisis in the southwest. Uttaran will continue its advocacy to make sure that an effective water resource management policy is accepted by the government. Next year we will undertake a project to improve life and livelihoods of those communities living in the Sundarban, in addition to our regular activities.

We hope Uttaran will continue its journey as a dependable organisation for the people of southwest Bangladesh. Our expectation is to march forward with the cooperation of all and the effort and talent of our workers.

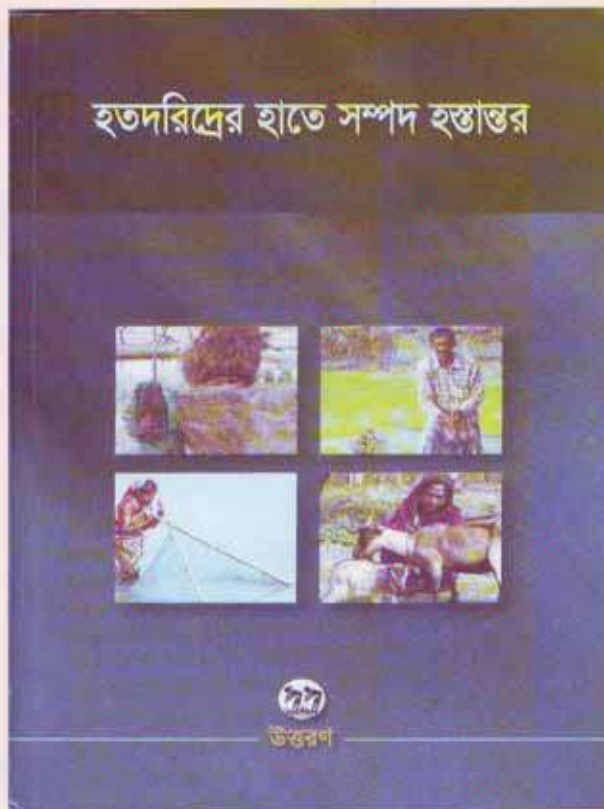
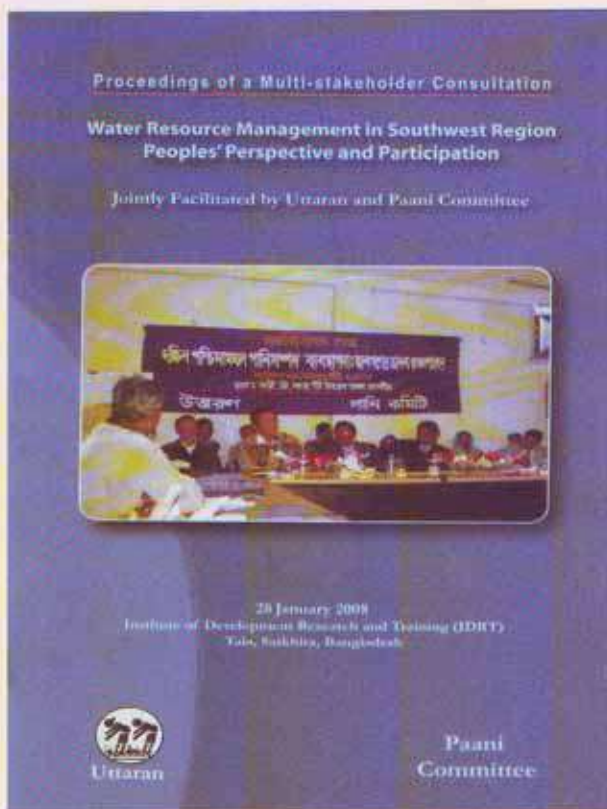
Publications

During the reporting period July 2007 - June 2008, Uttaran published three types of poster. The message of one poster is to motivate people to use Pond Sand Filter (PSF) water to save them from water borne diseases, the second one message is demand for abolish discrimination of male and female wages and the last one message is our Government is committed to establish rights of the landless people on the khasland. Three posters are showing below:



Beside posters, Uttaran published four booklets during the reporting period. One booklet topic is asset transfer among ultra-poor people, the second one is a proceedings of a consultation of water resource management in Southwest Bangladesh, third one briefed on

District Legal Aid Law and Gazette and the objectives and activities of District Legal Aid Committee and fourth one briefed on alternative adaptation activities in tidal basin areas of southwest region of Bangladesh. Cover pages of the mentioned booklets are showing below:



Uttaran

42, Satmosjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209

Balance Sheet as at June 30, 2008

PARTICULARS:	NOTES	2007-2008 AMOUNT (TK)	2006-2007 AMOUNT (TK)
PROPERTY AND ASSETS:			
FIXED ASSETS	13.00	18,593,755.39	17,485,437.91
REVOLVING LOAN FUND (RLF)	14.00	45,392,234.00	38,893,504.00
ADVANCES ACCOUNTS	16.00	-	864,228.76
LOAN ACCOUNT	15.00	-	690,937.00
CASH AND BANK BALANCES	17.00	15,127,017.22	,962,508.00
TOTAL ASSETS		79,113,006.61	65,896,615.67
FUND AND LIABILITIES:			
FUND ACCOUNT	10.00	58,845,669.83	43,750,991.13
CURRENT LIABILITIES	11.00	3,061,343.78	3,343,315.54
GROUP MEMBERS SAVINGS	12.00	17,205,993.00	18,802,309.00
TOTAL FUND AND LIABILITIES		79,113,006.61	65,896,615.67

Director

Coordinator (A&F)

Signed in terms of our separate of even date annexed.

Date: Dhaka, Bangladesh
6-Aug-08

KHAN WAHAB SHAFIQUE RAHMAN & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Uttaran

42, Satmosjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209

Income and Expenditures Accounts for the year ended June 30, 2008

INCOME	NOTES	2007-2008 AMOUNT (TK)	2006-2007 AMOUNT (TK)
Donor Grant Received		189,859,937.65	5,394,655.00
Uttaran General Fund		5,624,139.64	169,869.00
Micro Credit Program	29.00	4,251,186.00	4,428,322.00
Overhead Received		-	591,087.00
Other Received		-	2,732,228.00
Bank Interest		29,234.00	90,013.00
Income from Micro Bus Sale		311,559.06	-
Other Income		996,042.00	55,855.00
TOTAL INCOME		201,072,098.35	03,562,029.00
EXPENDITURES			
Program Cost		143,804,383.00	4,595,937.00
Personnel/Salaries		25,310,977.00	19,960,598.00
Administrative Cost		13,599,301.00	4,488,398.81
Micro Credit Program	30.00	2,058,841.00	-
Bank Charge		163,236.07	-
Overhead Cost		3,136,953.00	991,087.00
Interest on Savings/CARE		-	,349,527.00
Depreciation		2,036,788.58	,765,789.63
Surplus/Deficit transfer		10,961,618.70	10,691.56
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		201,072,098.35	03,562,029.00

Director

Coordinator (A&F)
Examined and Found correct.

Date: Dhaka, Bangladesh
August 06, 2008

KHAN WAHAB SHAFIQUE RAHMAN & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Uttaran

42, Satmosjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended June 30, 2008

RECEIPTS	NOTES	2007-2008 AMOUNT (TK)	2006-2007 AMOUNT (TK)
Opening Balance:	16.00	7,962,508.00	13,321,335.81
Donor Grant Received	17.00	189,859,937.65	5,394,655.00
Uttaran General Fund	18.00	10,675,199.64	169,869.00
Micro Credit Program	19.00	42,067,568.00	9,890,634.00
Bank Interest	20.00	29,234.00	90,013.00
Overhead Received		-	591,087.00
Other Income	21.00	996,042.00	2,621,289.00
Loan Received	22.00	2,143,234.00	392,907.00
Micro Bus Sale		435,000.00	-
Gratuity Received		576,778.00	456,836.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS		254,745,501.29	62,928,625.81
PAYMENTS			
Personnel Cost	23.00	25,310,977.00	9,960,598.00
Program Cost	24.00	143,804,383.00	9,588,676.00
Administrative Cost	25.00	13,599,301.00	10,464,524.81
Capital Cost	26.00	3,268,547.00	2,415,743.00
Loan Account	27.00	854,140.00	1,034,540.00
Savings and Credit Program	28.00	48,749,590.00	49,200,523.00
Bank Charge		163,236.07	-
Gratuity Refund		731,357.00	695,859.00
Overhead Cost		3,136,953.00	991,087.00
Grant Refund/Adjusted		-	514,567.00
Dues Refund to SCUU		-	100,000.00
Closing Balances	15.00	15,127,017.22	7,962,508.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS		254,745,501.29	162,928,625.81

Director

Coordinator (A&F)
Examined and Found correct.

Date: Dhaka, Bangladesh
August 06, 2008

KHAN WAHAB SHAFIQUE RAHMAN & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

DONOR GRANT RECEIVED

NAME OF DONORS	2007-2008 AMOUNT (TK)	2006-2007 AMOUNT (TK)
Manusher Jonno Foundation	15,443,379.00	11,997,315.00
European Union (CRAB)	1,509,736.46	6,304,382.00
European Union - WJCC (Lobster)	717,364.00	1,000,000.00
European Union (CAP)	-	10,839,466.00
ActionAid Bangladesh (DA)	6,562,878.00	5,001,374.00
ActionAid Bangladesh (CEF)	681,947.00	231,252.00
ActionAid Bangladesh (SIDR)	22,762,643.00	-
ActionAid Bangladesh (Livelihood)	307,203.00	1,549,424.00
International labor Organization (SIDR)	2,740,000.00	-
ActionAid Bangladesh (FoSHoL)	6,984,888.00	3,704,447.00
ActionAid Bangladesh (Relief Activities)	-	7,885,216.00
CARE (SIDR)	16,186,585.00	-
Oxfam (CBDRMP)	1,065,105.00	1,786,112.00
Oxfam-GB (Relief Activities)	-	7,206,250.00
Oxfam-GB (ECHO Relief Activities)	-	17,500,000.00
Oxfam-GB (SIDR)	72,118,604.00	-
Canadian International Development Agencies (Gender)	1,179,166.00	-
Canadian International Development Agencies (Flood)	2,203,908.00	-
Canadian International Development Agencies (SIDR)	1,961,400.00	-
Canadian International Development Agencies (Election)	673,388.00	-
CDMP	-	2,549,860.00
CIDA Election	-	1,356,411.00
CIDA Gender	-	1,179,166.00
Trocaire (Flood)	3,914,271.60	6,751,168.00
Trocaire (SIDR-1st Grant)	2,001,239.51	-
Trocaire (SIDR-2nd Grant)	8,410,205.67	-
Trocaire (Directors Treatment)	209,259.89	-
Misereor (Regular Project)	1,165,099.00	1,304,723.00
Misereor (Flood)	1,365,451.00	956,925.00
Misereor (SIDR)	2,997,790.79	-
JOCS (SIDR)	205,500.00	-
TOMONO KAI (Flood)	204,600.00	-
JOCS (Flood)	204,750.00	433,118.00
DRISTIPATH	219,724.50	-
Sight Savers International (BCCC)	3,725,693.00	1,869,710.00
Arannayk Foundation (Coastal)	799,700.00	683,237.00
Arannayk Foundation (Agroforestry)	1,039,884.00	228,582.00
The Asia Foundation (EWG)	1,990,760.00	1,098,727.00
Japan Bangladesh Friendship Society/M.College	-	589,146.00
Japan Embassy-IDRT Construction	5,825,443.60	-
The OPEC Fund for International (ASEH)	2,043,539.03	1,363,644.00
Front Line (Director Treatment)	195,935.90	-
Oxfam GB -Art Compe	216,420.00	-

SAP	-	25,000.00
Miscellaneous Grant	26,475.70	-
TOTAL GRANT RECEIVED	189,859,937.65	<u>95,394,655.00</u>

Director

Coordinator (A&F)
Examined and Found correct.

Date: Dhaka, Bangladesh
August 06,2008

KHAN WAHAB SHAFIQUE RAHMAN & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



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