



Uttaran



Community Mobilization - Poverty Eradication -
Environmental Justice

website- www.uttaran.net



**Standing alongside the
grassroots on their journey**

About us

Uttaran, which means 'transition', in the Bangla language has been living up to its name through a myriad of development interventions since 1985 from Jatpur village of Tala upazila under Satkhira district to uphold the rights of the poor and underprivileged. The organization was founded with the aim of building a society free from all inequalities where everyone can access and is aware of their basic rights. Being a people-centered organization, Uttaran has been using a rights-based approach to alleviate poverty, diversify livelihood opportunities and empower poor communities throughout the southwest coastal region with gradual expansion to other parts of the country.

In 2020-21, Uttaran was able to directly benefit 300,100 households concentrating especially on the landless, underprivileged women, outcastes, and untouchables who are victims of socio-economic classification, a hierarchic caste system, and a male-dominated society. Through a network of 48 offices, one training center with well-developed communications and operating procedures, 515 experienced and highly qualified staff, and 1,120 volunteers, Uttaran has developed a strong credibility among the communities and as well as the Government of Bangladesh.

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Vision

A society with gender,
class and caste equality

A woman in a vibrant red and blue patterned sari is the central focus, carrying a large, heavy metal pot on her head. She has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the side. In the background, other women are visible, some also carrying pots, suggesting a communal activity like water collection. The background is slightly blurred, showing a rural setting with simple buildings and a clear sky.

Mission

Equip the disadvantaged people with the tools needed to deal with their social, environmental, health, economic and cultural issues and concerns.

Our Participants

The organization works with extreme poor communities prioritizing landless communities, women, outcastes, untouchables and religion-ethnic minorities.

In 2021 - 2022

we were able to reach

300,100

Household directly



Working Area



- Satkhira,
- Jashore,
- Khulna,
- Bagerhat,
- Kushtia
- Meherpur
- Chuadanga
- Jhinaidaha
- Magura
- Narail
- Rajshahi
- Sunamganj
- Barisal,
- Bhola,
- Patuakhali,
- Barguna,
- Noakhali,
- Feni,
- Lakshmipur,
- Jamalpur,
- Faridpur,
- Shariatpur
- Cox's Bazar

Our Presence in Bangladesh

52 offices


624 Staffs in Uttaran's family (38% female)

1200 Youth Volunteers

Uttaran's - Programmes

- Rights, Gender and Social Justice (RGSJ)
- Food Security and Nutrition (FSN)
- Disaster and Humanitarian action (DHA)
- Climate Change, WASH and Water Governance (CCWG)
- Education and youth action (EYA)
- Integrated Rural Development (IRD)

Rights, Gender and Social Justice (RGSJ)

A woman wearing a red and white patterned sari is smiling and holding a white card. The card has the 'STEP' logo at the top, a small photo of her, and the text 'BENEFICIARY CARD'. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting.


Uttaran is dedicated to advocating for the constitutional and societal rights of the extreme poor, women, landless farmers, untouchables, and religio-ethnic minority communities. The goal is to provide and facilitate marginalized communities with the necessary tools to have a stronger voice in decision-making processes and the societal power structure. Poverty due to structural marginalization, implementation deficit in policies, maladaptation and climate change around the coast of Bangladesh is highly concerning. Uttaran's research indicates that a significant portion of the population in the Southwest region of Bangladesh owns very little land, are living below the extreme poverty line and have the lowest per capita income in the world. The existing societal inequality has worsened, leading families to resort to negative coping strategies. To address these issues, Uttaran established the Rights, Gender, and Social Justice Programme from its inception, aiming to protect constitutional and societal rights and ensure justice for underprivileged communities. The recent initiatives under this program have been instrumental in assisting these communities in navigating their challenging circumstances and mitigating losses and damages.

OUR APPROACHES TO RGSJ

- First responders towards violence against women, sexual harassment, and gender injustice
- We work with the government to reduce policy Implementation deficit.
- Facilitating marginalized communities voice in the decision-making process and deconstructing unjust societal power structure through capacity, social network and community led policy/plan making.
- Ensuring rights of landless farmers through Facilitating government's khas-land distribution process
- Ensuring underprivileged communities in accessing public and private services



Food Security and Nutrition (FSN)

A woman wearing a pink and white sari is looking down at a basket of green leafy vegetables. The background is a blurred green field.


Food security and nutrition are crucial challenges for Bangladesh. A large portion of the population struggles with it mainly due to inadequate access to safe and nutritious food, limited resources, and poor distribution. This situation is worse for the coastal area because of change in climate and high frequency of disasters frequent natural [ZS1] disasters, such as flooding and cyclones, which disrupt food production and distribution. Efforts to improve food security and nutrition in Bangladesh must be comprehensive and multidimensional. According to World Food Program (WFP), 65.3 million people are food insecure in Bangladesh which is roughly 45% of the entire population. For the past 36 years, Uttaran has been dedicated to ending hunger, achieving food security, and promoting sustainable agriculture in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh and other partners. In pursuit of national targets, Uttaran has set a goal to end hunger by 2030. Over the past decade, the program has incorporated the concept of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) and resilient food systems to ensure environmental sustainability and social acceptability. By integrating CSA principles, such as climate-resilient crop varieties and sustainable farming techniques, the program aims to enhance agricultural productivity while reducing environmental impacts. Additionally, it focuses on fostering diverse and sustainable agricultural practices, local food production, and strong market linkages to build resilient food systems. These strategies enable communities to adapt to climate change and alleviate food security challenges. Through its extensive field experience, community research actions and commitment to sustainable development, Uttaran is working to ensure that communities have access to adequate and nutritious food while also protecting the environment and fostering economic growth.

OUR APPROACHES TO FSN

- Ensuring justice, enabling capacity for sustainable and resilient agricultural practices, and creating access to credit and market linkages for small scale farmers to improve livelihood and nutrition.
- Promoting sustainable food systems through multi-stakeholder approach.
- Facilitating resilient multiple livelihood options and nutrition education and awareness for landless farmers.
- Increase of agricultural production, produce quality ensure and reducing carbon footprint for large scale farmers
- Establishment of seed banks and conserving natural resources to protect indigenous and diverse crop system



Disaster and Humanitarian action (DHA)

A photograph showing two individuals on a motorcycle. The person on the left is wearing a white protective suit, a white face mask, and orange gloves, and is holding a clear plastic bottle. The person on the right is wearing a white t-shirt, a blue face mask, and orange safety gear. They are outdoors, with green foliage in the background. The motorcycle has '125' written on the side.

Bangladesh's strategic geographical position and high population density make it highly vulnerable to devastating disasters. The impacts of climate change, inadequate planning, insufficient infrastructure, and inequality have worsened the frequency and intensity of these calamities over the past decade. In the face of increasing disaster risks, Uttaran's Disaster and Humanitarian Action (DHA) program has taken a proactive approach towards disaster management. Rather than solely focusing on post-disaster relief efforts, the program emphasizes building resilience, reducing disaster risks, developing forecasting systems and early action to reduce loss of life and assets. The program aims to enhance disaster resilience, foster climate adaptability, and mitigate associated risks. In addition, with a well-equipped team of 70 professionals and 527 dedicated volunteers, Uttaran promptly responds to emergency calls, providing immediate relief and assistance to coastal regions. Since 2010, they have supported over 4 million individuals in coastal districts, reaching even the most remote areas. Uttaran's unwavering dedication and courage inspire others.

OUR APPROACHES TO DHA

- Building resilience for community and HH leading to reduction of Disaster Risk
- Fostering networks among regional humanitarian organizations to ensure improve collaboration and planning.
- Ensuring contiguous process in post disaster response
- Developing impact-based forecast model to reduce assets lost and protect infrastructure.
- Catalyzing Local pool funds for immediate relief support
- Formulating transformative relief mechanisms during fund crisis for adaptive recovery



Climate Change, WASH and Water Governance (CCWWG)

Climate change disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, despite their minimal carbon footprints. At Uttaran, our Climate Change, WASH, and Water Governance (CCWWG) program lies at the heart of our strategy to support and empower climate-vulnerable communities and governments, striving for climate justice. Recognizing the significant impact of climate change on the WASH sector, we have integrated it into our program.

Throughout the years, we have focused on building the capacity of local governments and vulnerable communities, equipping them with anticipatory, absorptive, adaptive, and transformative skills to effectively address and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Our program embraces participatory approaches, ensuring the development of sustainable solutions. We provide financial and technical support to empower climate-vulnerable individuals, enabling them to adapt to the challenges posed by climate change.

In addition, since the 1990s, Uttaran, and Paani (Water) Committee, a locally led civil society committee, has been advocating for nature-based solutions to water management issues in the southwest region. Our aim is to enhance the participation of local communities in water governance processes. Our efforts have led to the adoption of the Tidal River Management concept, recognized as a key strategy to combat waterlogging and climate change in the southwest coastal areas of Bangladesh, as outlined in the BDP 2100.

The program serves as a vital conduit, fostering stronger solidarity and trust between the people, civil society, private sector and the Government. Its primary purpose is to empower communities, amplifying their voices in the decision-making process, while simultaneously dismantling maladaptive infrastructures. Through the promotion of nature-based solutions, the program fosters sustainable practices that align with the ecological fabric of the region. Moreover, it pioneers the establishment of community-based monitoring systems, effectively minimizing implementation deficits. By fostering an environment of trust and solidarity among all stakeholders, the program lays the foundation for a stronger, more resilient society.

Uttaran's CCWWG program leverages its in-depth theoretical knowledge and extensive field experience to enhance project design. It has developed its own climate change strategy that effectively merges global frameworks with local contextual vulnerabilities and opportunities. This strategic approach ensures a comprehensive and contextualized response to address the challenges of climate change.

OUR APPROACHES TO CCWG

- Fostering Anticipatory, absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacity to build resilience of climate vulnerable communities and their institutional structures and processes
- Developing impact-based forecast model aimed at minimizing asset losses, safeguarding critical infrastructure, and generating empirical evidence to advocate for the allocation of loss and damage funds to affected communities.
- Facilitating Community led action to promote nature-based solutions to water management and governance issues
- Bridge the gap and amplify the voices of the people, facilitating effective communication and collaboration between the community and government, to ensure a participatory approach to delta management in the south-west coastal region of Bangladesh.
- Fostering innovation and catalyzing low cost safe WASH entrepreneurship.



Education and youth action (EYA)

Uttaran initiated its development efforts by establishing a school in Jatpur village of Satkhira district in 1982. Since then, Uttaran has expanded its educational initiatives, setting up elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, technical education centers, libraries and non formal primary schools. Over the years, Uttaran has supported formal education and technical training for more than 265,000 students. But Uttaran's impact extends beyond the realms of academia. Recognizing the immense potential of youth, the organization has launched an array of initiatives spanning the entire southwestern coastal region of Bangladesh. The focus revolves around empowering young minds, cultivating their leadership acumen, fostering holistic human development, igniting environmental consciousness, and integrating youth into the very fabric of developmental practices and decision-making. Currently Uttaran has a volunteer group of over 1200 youth members (The Youth wing known as Pathok Forum) who are engaged in various social activities all over the coastal belt.

While the global pandemic has disrupted traditional educational paradigms, Uttaran remains resolute in its commitment to safeguarding the future of students.. Moreover, Uttaran recognizes the perils of students dropping out due to these challenging circumstances. In response, we are spearheading comprehensive efforts to prevent dropout rates by introducing non-formal education programs, life skills training, and seamless mainstreaming opportunities within diverse institutions. The organization is committed to supporting students and ensuring their continued learning during these difficult times.

OUR APPROACHES TO EYA

- Establishment of educational and cultural institution to ensure access to quality education.
- Capacity and leadership development to facilitate youth-led initiatives
- Teacher Training and Capacity Building
- Vocational and Skill Development training programs to equip youth with essential skills required for employment and entrepreneurship.



Integrated Rural Development (IRD)

A woman wearing a blue patterned headscarf and a blue patterned shirt is smiling as she feeds a brown and white cow. She is holding a large white bowl filled with green leafy vegetables. The cow is standing in front of a concrete wall. In the background, there is a structure with a corrugated metal roof supported by wooden beams. The overall scene is set in a rural environment.

The Integrated Rural Development programme has evolved from Uttaran's earlier programme Human Development in 2006. The programme is solely aimed at ending poverty and improving the quality of life for the extreme poor and underprivileged communities through holistic and integrated community development intervention. It is driven by rights and need-based approach to advance and uphold the rights of the marginalized people with the priority of landless, women-headed families, destitute families, untouchables, Religio-ethnic minor communities and outcaste minorities. The programme gives the underprivileged communities a collective voice and develops their capacity or various social, environmental, rights and development aspects. The organized groups are also provided with access to financial resources and social entrepreneurial training to alleviate from poverty. Additionally, these people are also provided with healthcare, educational, agricultural, nutritional and WASH related support and training. Currently Uttaran is working in 151 Unions with 25,102 members in 1502 PO.

Uttaran currently has 5 separate loan schemes out of which two are interest free loans:

- Rural Micro credit
- Micro enterprise and Women development enterprise
- Biogas Loan

Interest Free Loan:

- Khas land Allocation loan
- Aranyak



Uttaran's Institutions





- 3 Primary Schools
- 1 Secondary school
- 1 Training and Research center
- 2 Technical training center
- 1 College
- 1 Library
- 11 Mobile Technical center



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People's Forum of Uttaran



Paani Committee



Wildlife Mission



Pathok Forum Youth Volunteers



Bhumi Committee

Our community drives us forward



Contribution Towards SDG

Uttaran's support for transition are aligned with Bangladesh Government vision 2041

Contribution towards UN Sustainable Development Goals



Our Partners



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