

Final report

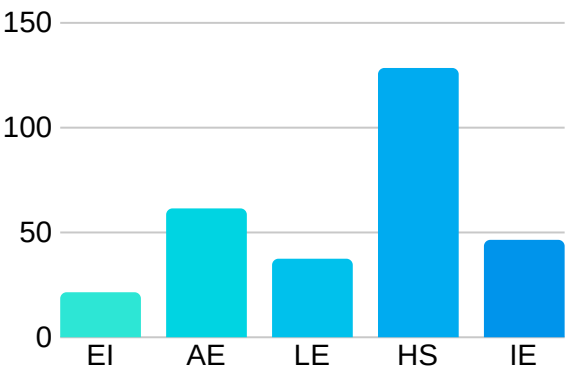
MARCH 2020

WE CAN MAKE CHANGE



RESULTS

Actual number of children in the different programs.



EI = early intervention
AE = Appropriate education
LE = Livelihood education
HS = homebased support
IE = Inclusive education

Gender:



92



73

Support:



early
intervention

21



socialization

165



education

144



care

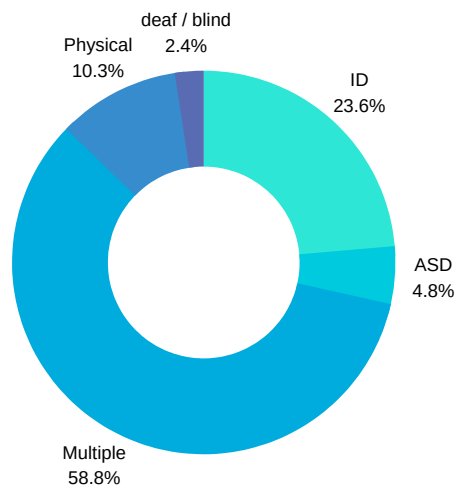
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healthy meal

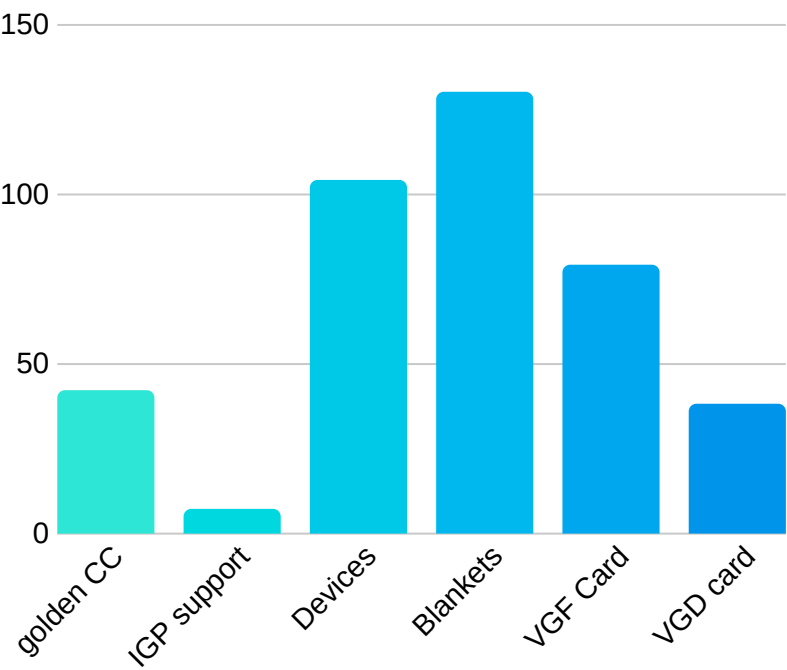
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Disability of the children:



ID = Intellectual disabled
ASD = Autism spectrum disorder
Physical= Physical disability
Multiple = Multiple disorders
Deaf / Blind = vision or hearing problems.

Government support for individual students:



WE CAN make change

Awareness, Care and Education program for people with disabilities in Bangladesh

To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (SDG3), Niketan raises awareness and strengthens the essential services by providing opportunities for capacity building. To end all forms of discrimination (SDG5) we include and mainstream children with disabilities in everyday activities and encourage them to play roles similar to their peers without a disability. Inclusion should lead to increased meaningful participation in socially expected life roles and activities.

To support inclusion for families, Niketan implements an intersectional approach to understand how different factors intersect in shaping individual identities. Considered were gender, age, ability, culture, language, class and education while designing their individual education or rehabilitation plans. We considered whether our project activities lead to the removal of barriers and stigma, and recognized that children and youngsters can face various barriers and that they all have different strengths. Niketan made sure that messages are understandable and developed in consultation with youngsters and parents.

Our goal is: giving people with a disability a voice. A voice for an inclusive society.

BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

The goal of our awareness and advocacy program is to help the local government to make an inclusive society reality. This implies a change of policies and practices and ensuring these policies are implemented effectively to break down the attitudinal, physical and financial barriers for people with a disability.

The last five years, this project's networking and advocacy activities with various government stakeholders has played a significant role in enhancing community leaders' knowledge and interest for persons with disabilities. For example, community leaders arranged several trainings while also paying for tube-wells, solar panels, assistive devices, sewing machines, land for building a house or a shop for persons with disabilities, from the central budget or other local resources.

To initiate real change and make the care for children with disabilities sustainable, the current charity approach should become a rights-based approach and mainstream disability in all regular government services. Therefore, Niketan conducted a research among 9 government institutes to locate available resources.

With the outcome of this research an integrated and sustainable strategy can be designed to help persons with disabilities escape poverty. The research was conducted with 9 departments of Upazilla Administration Office of Ghior and Daulatpur Upazilla of Manikgonj.

Research results revealed that the department of Woman Affairs, Education (primary and secondary) and Social service are aware of the rights of people with disability and have some provisions for them. But they all mention that they do not receive enough training and money from the government to adequately support persons with disabilities. The department of Agriculture, Youth, Health and Statistics never received any training on disability, nor does the department have any program for people with a disability. All respondents mention that there are no proper disability data and therefore they do not know the needs of persons with disabilities. The conclusion is that the departments are not inclusive at all, that there are almost no resources and that there is a lack of knowledge and data.

If you are interested to receive the full report, please let us know.

In the We Can make CHANGE project beside meetings with the government, different awareness activities were organised:

TRAINING OF LOCAL PRIMARY CARE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND PHARMACISTS

When parents suspect something is wrong with their child, they first visit the local pharmacy or health clinic. These professionals are often insufficiently trained and unable to make a diagnosis. They often send parents back with an enormous amount of medicines at high cost. In 2019, 50 pharmacists and 37 health workers were trained to recognize symptoms of various disabilities and to refer children to rehabilitation centers. This way, parents get the right help faster and children are less exposed to "dangerous" medicines or treatments. We trained 30 more pharmacists and 27 health professionals than planned, because the local government was so enthusiastic about the training that they provided us the facilities so that on request of the director of the local hospital his staff could join the training.

My name is Nizam Uddin. I'm a local medical assistant. I got the training on disability identification & referral service. After training I don't give the epilepsy medicine without prescription. Now I can identify the disability and refer to DRRA and hospital.

WOMAN PROTECTION COMMITTEES

Violence against women is a serious social, cultural and economic problem in Bangladesh, where almost two out of three women experience gender-based violence. Like many girls who are abused, girls with disabilities are usually abused by someone they know, such as their father or other family member or neighbours. In addition, they experience emotional and verbal violence. Effects can be short-term or long-term which can be as serious as the effects of physical abuse. It is crucial that people with disabilities grow up to be adults with self-respect and as valued members of the community.

In order to address violence and child marriage, we have established 8 "woman protection committee". Each committee consists of a parent, a person with a disability, a teacher, a local government representative, a religious person and a woman. The committee moderate and has a strong preventive role. In the villages where a committee is active, our youngsters report a reduction in verbal and physical violence.

I'm Abdul Aoual. I'm a village leader of Charmastul in Doulatpur Upazila. I'm also vice president of Charmastul woman protection committee. On August 19 a girl with an intellectual disability age 27, was tortured by her neighbor. We judge that person and give him a fine. We also prevent early child marriage. Now our community is aware on disability issues.

INCLUSIVE SOCIETY MEETINGS

In four villages we organized inclusive society meetings for all inhabitants. This consists of an open-air cinema in which we show a favorite or famous movie. During breaks we show a movie of a child with a disability in a positive manner to challenge disability stigma. Since most of the villagers do not have a TV, those open-air cinemas are very much appreciated. Through those meetings we reach out to hundreds of villagers of different ages.

CARE GIVERS TRAINING

We impressed the Ghior Upazilla Social Welfare Office with the quality of our trainings to various professionals and therefore they requested our We Can team to provide a care givers training on how to take proper care of children. Seventy-one parents of children with and without disabilities participated in this training. The training consisted of topics such as the development phases of children, the importance of play and a positive attitude. We also took the opportunity to discuss disability rights and inclusion in mainstream society.

AWARENESS & ADVOCACY



Open air cinema to inform the villagers about disability and inclusion.



The local government donated wheelchairs, walkers and crutches, warm blankets and housing facilities to families with a disabled child.



Nizam Uddin, local pharmacist



A family received a house from the government

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

During previous years we learned that raising awareness in mainstream schools (20) helps children with a disability to go to regular schools and help teachers with knowledge and skills to support learners with a disability. We were able to decrease the drop-out rate of children with behavioral difficulties and reduce attitude barriers by taking a combined approach of special and inclusive education. Other drop-out causes are lack of appropriate teaching material (43%), lack of accessibility (35%), lack of affordability (34%) and lack of para-medical support (28%). 71% of children with a complex disability do not finish primary education. Getting complex disabled children enrolled in mainstream education is not our goal, as there is still a huge shortage of qualified inclusive regular teachers. But we do promote and realize access of children with mild or moderate cognitive or physical disabilities in mainstream schools. Worldwide experience has shown that this benefits all children in the classroom, with and without disability.

In 2019 Niketan included 20 new mainstream schools in our awareness raising program. In those 20 schools 46 children with a disability receive education (and are registered students). In several meetings we had discussions with the students, teachers and School Management Committee (SMC) providing general information about disability and equal opportunities, child rights, responsibilities of students and teachers. We guided the teachers and the SMC in preparing a plan to make their school into a disabled friendly learning environment. The teachers are happy that they receive guidance in educating children with disabilities.

Though legally bound by the government to do so, most teachers feel uncertain how to teach children with disabilities since they do not receive any professional support from the government. Also, 28 education scholarships for the students with disabilities were provided by the Upazilla Education Office.



I'm Tahmina Dewan. I'm head teacher of 82 Ramkantapur Government primary school. There are 6 children with a disability in my school. Before our work with DRRRA we cannot identify disability and did not knew the different type of disability. Now we give extra care to our student with a disability. We included them in sports and cultural activities in my school. We made a ramp. Now the school environment is disability friendly.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



In our inclusive education approach we train mainstream teachers and sensitize peers and their parents. We support 46 children with a disability and their families when they face problems with the teacher or school authority.



Preparing a plan to make the schools disability friendly.



Priti Akhter a girl with a development delay passed her final exam for primary school.

LIVELIHOOD EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

To end poverty (SDG1) and to ensure lifelong learning and a sustainable livelihoods (SDG4) for all youngsters, especially girls with a disability (SDG5) and their families became empowered.

Youngsters with a disability are usually not allowed to make their own decisions, because of preconceived ideas, myths and prejudices about their “capacity” to do so as well as sometimes their communication barriers. The livelihood education program aims to teach interpersonal skills that help youngsters with a disability to make their own choices and prepare them for an active and meaningful role in mainstream society.

In 2019, 15 students successfully passed the third test level of “asking a question” of the My Way to Work training. This training consists of topics such as social skills, work attitude and personal hygiene. 12 youngsters followed the training module “On my own”, in which they learn how to handle money responsibly. Niketan hoped to finalize the ‘On my own’ training in one year and start a new batch of youngsters. However, the training content was a challenge for the trainer and thus also for the students. We discovered a serious lack of knowledge on this subject in our training team and to spend much more time to train the trainers.

Twelve girls successfully completed the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) training ‘It’s my body’. Niketan planned to provide training to 20 girls, but we experienced that the group was too big for the girls to be comfortable and share intimate information. With the group we decided to reduce the group size and to involve the 8 girls left in a next training.

The training outcome included that the girls are more assertive, have more self-confidence and an improved self-image. They now dare to walk alone on the street, they better understand body posture and intentions of boys and men and are able to say “no” to indecent proposals. It is wonderful to see how easy and open the girls now talk about subjects they walked away from a year ago thanks to the Peer to Peer program, while girls talk more easily about sexual issues at home too. In 2020 we will start with a new group of 12 girls.

The youngsters from the various trainings indicate that they feel stronger and more equal, their voice is heard and their opinion counts, which gives them more control over their own lives. We see that the youngsters have gained more self-confidence, that their communication skills have improved and that they become a valued member of mainstream society.



NOW I CAN HELP OTHER GIRLS WITH QUESTIONS REGARDING SRHR.

Sriti Rani Das is a girl of Daulatpur Upazila with a physical disability. She is 14 years old and is enrolled in class eight in Daulatpur P.S Government high school. Her mother and father also have a disability. Because of her disability other students underestimate her intelligence and she was frequently a victim of verbal abuse. When gaining adolescence she became afraid for men, she didn't understand the changes she was undergoing and didn't like the intimate touches of her teacher. In the SRHR peer to peer training 'It's my body', she learned about menstruation, friendship, abuse etc. She understood the wrong intention of her teacher and the forced sex between him and his students.

She became better friends with her peers without disabilities and they openly shared all their feelings. Her relationship with her mother became stronger while sharing all SRHR lessons learned with her. Nowadays she can protest and protect herself from verbal abuse and help other students with disability to overcome their shyness and to raise their voice when they are at danger to be abused.

Note: the We Can team discussed the sexual harassment and abuse of the teacher in Sriti story with the Head teacher of the school. He discussed it with all the teachers, condemned it and raised more awareness on the issue.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

It is critical that people with disabilities while growing into adulthood learn to identify themselves with self-respect as individuals and as members of a successful disability community.

Teenagers with disabilities are often filled with a sense of shame and self-consciousness and to encourage and support teenagers with a disability to have their voice heard Niketan likes to start a youth leadership program with 20 youngsters.

Within the group of twenty girls that we started with, we found sixteen girls adequately equipped and motivated to start the "leadership" training in which they learn to stand up for their rights and to for example discuss domestic violence within their family. We continued the training with those sixteen girls. To get insight in the training needs of the girls, we had different consultation and sharing sessions, interviews and tests like a self - esteem test. We discovered that they have a low self-esteem, that they do not properly understand their own unique characteristics and that they have no idea about their own strengths. In these sessions they also shared their awful stories of being slapped, being rejected, or being called names such as 'crazy' by their own families. It was important to give the girls time to share all their stories, to cry together and to let them openly dream about how they could overcome this.

Beside their family, society and their own attitudinal barriers, we found that they also experience physical, informational, communication and financial barriers.

In 2019 Niketan focused on the internal empowerment of the girls. We supported them to imagine an alternative future, we helped them to gain courage and taught them new skills, by providing training in recognizing and valuing their own characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, we taught the girls about disability legislation and their rights. It was an unrealistic goal to believe that those girls would be able to raise their voice in public in only one year.

However, small successes are made, as one girl raised her voice and called the police when a neighbor tried to rape her and another girl openly discussed her feelings around abuse in a social abuse committee session.

In 2020 Niketan plans to continue the internal and external empowerment training in which young people with disabilities learn to apply lesson learned in practice. We will for example teach and practice public speaking. A recurring topic in the sharing sessions was that girls with disabilities often refrain from speaking out due to a negative self-image, shyness and lack of communication skills. Public speaking will therefore play an important role in the skills training in 2020.

A roll model:

Tumpa is 17 years old girl with a hearing impairment. In 2019 she received the the "Winner Award" from the mayor of Doulatpur. She received this award for her achievement to build a full life despite her disability. Tumpa has her own small business and her income ensures that her family respects and accepted her.

EMPLOYMENT

Worldwide, many people with disabilities are unemployed . In Bangladesh, 80% to 90% of people with disabilities of working age have no work. In a country with a population of 160 million, they also have only a small chance of a working life.

To ensure inclusion on the labor market, Niketan maintained close contact with six companies in Ghior. This has not yet directly created jobs for the young people with a disability, but it has created job opportunities for 3 parents. The Akij company donated a prosthesis for a child with an amputated leg.

In 2020 we will start a partnership with Unilever Bangladesh. This company wants to join us in exploring the possibilities of offering young people with a disability a safe workplace in their company after finalizing their 'My way to Work' education. In the coming years we like to find likeminded organizations / companies to reach our goal to include youngsters in the job industry.

Two teenagers started to work in their family business, one works in a small restaurant and the other runs a grocery shop with his brother.



LIVELIHOOD EDUCATION



Exam of the SRHR training



Leadership training, how to speak for public



Rafi helps his parents in their local restaurant

We provide livelihood education towards 39 youngsters and leadership training towards 16 girls. We stimulate their social, cognitive and emotional development by using our Right to Decide approach.



Tumpa with her Winner Award.



Tumpa running her own business

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE FOR THE DISABLED (CRCD)

The CRCD is for parents in remote villages in Daulatpur and Ghior a window for support and care, education and government assistance. It brings a certain level of awareness and hope to the parents and provides them with the possibility to make a difference in the quality of life for their child with a disability despite the limited resources they can mobilize.

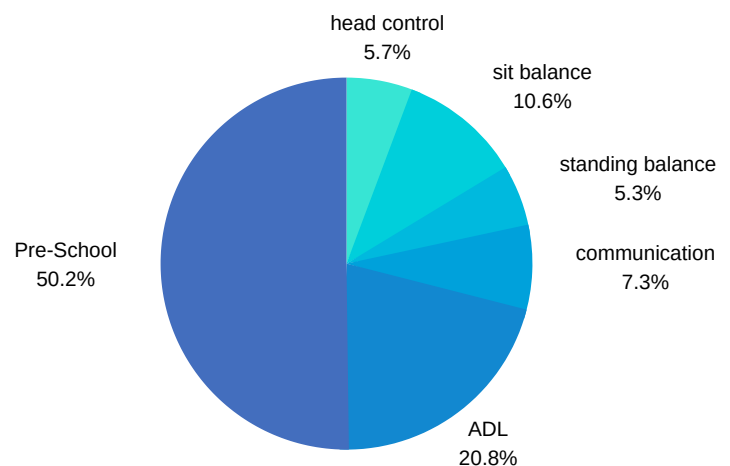
In 2019 we provided care and therapy in 15 CRCDs for 165 children. In the 15 CRCDs one Assistant Physiotherapist (APT) and two Community Development Organizers (CDO) serve the children with disability. One CRCD covers 2-3 villages. The centres are organized once a week on a veranda of a family with a child with disability or somebody else in the village who provides its veranda for this purpose.

Once diagnosed with a disability, rehabilitation is often an important key to ensure children can maximize their capabilities and have the chance to participate fully just as other children. Niketan focuses on the unique possibilities of each parent and child. Parents are part of the project and learn to stimulate the development of the child in a playful way. We use an approach that considers the skills children already possess and teaches the skills necessary to become independent in a given activity at their highest functional level. The children are encouraged to develop their skills within their possibilities by using the 'small steps forward model'.

This model offers supervisors insight into the development of the child and the small steps that need to be taken in order to master new skills. We stimulate the children to move independently. We provide physiotherapy for independent movement by strengthening muscles, reducing stiffness, or improving balance. Assistive devices such as prone standing-frames and braces are provided. It helps the child to strengthen his muscles, it stimulates the senses and improves physical development. It also gives a new perception of the world and improves social skills.

This prepares the child for transition to less restrictive environments and activities. Physiotherapists and special needs teachers include play and other cognitive stimulation in a child's rehabilitation program to help improve cognitive growth.

In the next chapter an overview of what the children achieved:



The individual rehabilitation reports show that the Niketan care and education program has an impact on the development of the children as they gained better social, physical and cognitive skills. Parents learned how to attend to and support the child at home. Instead of a burden, they are now seen as a valued member of the family. The development of their child gives them the freedom to spend time on other activities and motivates them to send their child to a CRCD or school.

MULTIPURPOSE VOLUNTEERS

In 2019 Niketan trained 10 parents and 10 volunteers to become multipurpose volunteers. They received training in how to use play and games to develop the fine and gross motor of children with a disability. They also received training on how to organize a veranda school, how to recognize disabilities and to whom to refer when needed. Two 'veranda' schools were handed over to parents and volunteers after such intensive training. In 2020 they will provide care and education to 10 children each, independently, with minimal support.

When monitoring shows that the quality of care is maintained and parents can run schools independently, we will again hand over 'veranda schools' to parents in 2021.

I'm Rina Das. I'm a multipurpose volunteer. My child's name is Oishi Das, he has Cerebral Palsy. Now I am organizing Mouhaly CRCD. I can work with my child and other children. Gradually, my child's condition is improving. His head balance is better and his epilepsy seizures decreased. I want to continue this project and help children with disabilities.

With 5 parent forums, Niketan organized thirty meetings. The parent forums make their own agenda. Discussions were about equal rights, exclusion by family, local government regulations, inclusion in mainstream education, abuse etc.

BUDDY'S

100 volunteers attended 4 refreshers courses. In those sessions they share the problems they are facing with a child with a disability or his family, and they get more indepth information about the development of the child, the individual goals of the children and their dreams. The volunteers act like a buddy for the child and the whole family, they share their personal view and problems and by doing this learn from eachother.

With the volunteers the possibility to hand-over more CRCDs in the future is discussed. Niketan was informed that they might be able to run a few more CRCDs, but that they need more training on total communication especially sign language to be able to communicate with children with hearing or speech impairments. They have prepared a 6 months plan how they will run the Community Resource Center for the Disabled (CRCD).

SUSTAINABLE CRCD



A CRCD runned by multipurpose volunteers



Multipurpose volunteer Rina Das with her son Oishi



Appropriate education class on the theme Flowers in a CRCD



Opening of a new CRCD

In 15 CRCD's we provide weekly therapy and education to 165 children. We support parents to get from the government what they are entitled to get.



Providing devices for the children

CONCLUSION

The project runs in a satisfactory way. The team is dedicated and well equipped to run the program.

The parents are not only happy because they see progress in their child, but also because the program helps them to get out of the poverty circle through trainings and by getting government support.

The children experience joy whenever the CRCD is open, they shows their happiness by participating in the games and education program. They make friendships and feel appreciated.

The government is more and more cooperative in supporting families with disabled children and the society is more aware of inclusion.

Our holistic approach who left nobody behind unite communities and made them more aware of the rights and needs of people with a disability.

We found that in our empowerment program we have to train and include fathers in a more active way, They are the decision makers in a family and when they value the life of their child with a disability, less domestic violence and sexual harrasment will take place.

FINANCIAL JUSTIFICATION

The financial justification is included in the excel sheet.

A summary of our donations spend to DRRA:

Date	Euro	Rate	Taka
26-02	11.903	93,7	1.115.689
23-05	11.903	92,3	1.098.875
31-07	11.903	92,3	1.098.875
13-11	11.904	91,5	1.089.740

COVERAGE OVERVIEW

