



*An eNewsletter from SUPRO, Bangladesh*

**Issue: November- December, 2008**

## **Country needs its own Development Policy, MDG is Questioned as a Development Tool**

**Speakers told at Round table discussion of SUPRO at the National Press Club**



Poverty situation in the country has deteriorated due to natural calamities and price hike of essential goods and commodities while improvement in primary education is remarkable to attaining Millennium Development Goals (MDG). To eradicate poverty, the country needs own development policy. Presently, MDG is questioned as a development tool. Speakers told at round table discussion at National Press Club on 8 November 2008. The discussion titled 'Millennium Development Goal: Progress, Evaluation and Review' was organized by Sushanoner Jonny Prochraivizan (SUPRO).

Lawrence Besra, Project Coordinator of SUPRO presented a position paper stating that, according to BBS ( Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics) the income poverty was decreased to 48.9 percent in 2000, which was the base year of MDG from 58.8 percent in 1991-92. According to this observation, the poverty level was reduced more in urban areas than in rural areas. Again the poverty level increased to 48 percent in 2008 due to natural calamities and price hike.

Ahmed Swapan Mahmood moderated the round table. He raised a question whether the MDG is the target of our development or it is an imposed prescription of the international monetary organizations.

Former state minister Abdul Mannan laid emphasis on land reform for poverty eradication. He also urged the government to provide subsidy to agriculture for the shake of the national interest rejecting the advice of the donors and other international organizations.

Speaking as a chief guest Justice Golam Rabbani called for implementing articles 59 and 60 of the constitution to help eradicate hunger and poverty.

Politburew member of the Workers Party of Bangladesh Haider Akbar Khan Rono urged both Awami League and BNP to cancel all coal agreement signed during their regimes for the shake of national interest.

Former army chief and lawmaker Mahbubur Rahman, former state minister AKM Zahangir Hossain and chief Executive officer Prodip Kumar Roy were present in the round table discussion.

Representative of different organizations working at the grass-root level pleaded for ensuring primary education. They also urged for updating health service, improving the standard of living and education to around six crore people of the country from the abyss of poverty.



## Capacity Building on Budget Analysis and Public Service Monitoring Training was held.



To build a critical position on PRSP and Budget among civil society leaders at district level through reviewing critically 2<sup>nd</sup> PRSP in line with MDGs and Essentials Services, SUPRO organized a training workshop titled ` **Capacity building on Budget Analysis and Public Service Monitoring** ' at district level. This training was held in two batches. First it was held on 04-06 at comilla and second batch was held on 11-13 November 08 at Rajshahi. A total of 43 participants (36 male, 7 female) attended the training workshop.

The overall objective of this training workshop is to enhance the capacity on budget analysis and Public services monitoring of the participants. The specific objectives of the training workshop are -

- To provide a conceptual understanding on national budget and its characteristics
- To strengthen monitoring capacity to monitor allocation of public services in national budget
- To enhance their mobilization and campaigning skills to campaign at grass root level.

The training workshop addressed almost all the relevant areas at a glance. The contents included Budget: some basic concepts, Budget analysis, what is public service, important public services such as health, education and agriculture, why should state provide those service to the citizens, the impact of privatization and commercialization of public services to mass people, budget preparation process and its circle, public service monitoring tools and why it should be monitored by citizens and micro- macro linkages, a strategy of SUPRO's campaign.

The training workshop on "Capacity Building on Budget Analysis Public Services Monitoring" was designed in a way to capture the basic concepts of the budget and it implementation process and public services. To attain the objectives of the course, 9 Key sessions were kept to discuss and experience sharing and 1 session were group work design a demo campaign on public services monitoring. On the other hand, the methods of the training were interactive so that the participant could easily share their experience and opinion about the about the content of the training workshop.



## Training on Rights based Approach and its Integration was held



Presently Rights Based Approach is one of the development approaches which is practiced all over the world. Rights based Approach integrates human rights concepts in the development process to effectively target human freedom. A Rights based Approach puts the poor, marginalized, vulnerable groups at the core of policy and the focus of the capacity development strategies. Under this view, SUPRO has undertaken the decision to organize training to implement RBA at district level; SUPRO organized a basic course on RBA for district level civil society leaders of district committees.

This training was held simultaneously as two batches on 30 November -2 December in Dinajpur and Chittagang. A total of 44 participants attended the course. Among them, 4 were women and 40 were men.

The overall objective of this training course is to enhance participant's skills on Rights based Approach. The specific objectives of the training course are as follows:

- To provide a conceptual understanding on Rights based approach and its characteristics
- To initiate clear understanding to Identify the sector of Rights based approach integration; and

- To enhance their understanding and skills to Conduct training course on RBA within the organization.

The contents included Rights based Approach, Rights and its Sources (Human Rights declaration, Constitution), Relation between Rights and Developments, Comparison between Service Delivery and Rights based Approach, Deferent sector to integrate Rights based Approach, Advocacy and Challenges Rights based Approach.



## Project Orientation of RTI Project 'Access to Information for Greater Participation and Government Accountability'



Without free flow of information and access to information it is quite impossible to establish human rights and good governance in all sphere of the society. The project orientation held on 26<sup>th</sup> November at WVA auditorium in Dhaka organized by SUPRO, have expressed their concern regarding the right to information in the present context of Bangladesh. Currently, SUPRO is implementing a project titled 'Access to Information for Greater Participation and Government Accountability' funded by A-19. In the day long

orientation of RTI project, 19 focal persons (male-16, female -3) of 20 districts where RTI project will be implemented have attended the project orientation. In the inaugural session, Tahmina Rahman, Country Director of A-19, Bangladesh has chaired the program while Prodip Kumar Roy, CEO of SUPRO has delivered the opening speech to the participants elaborating the goals and objectives of the orientation program.

Tahmina Rahman has precisely explained the origin and back ground of RTI including the mobilization process of RTI draft formulation, Finalization of RTI gazette, 2008 and the role and responsibilities of Information Commission of RTI including the major focus on campaign and mobilization on RTI at grass roots activism. She has also enlightened the RTI project activities on which SUPRO and 20 focal points will be working in the next couple of years especially analyzing critically on demand side and supply side of the project and clearly focused on what kinds of outcome and impact will be measured after the completion of the project.

Lawrence Besra, Program Coordinator of RTI project has briefed on the goals and objective of the project, project activities, and implementation process of activities, roles and responsibilities of focal points, RTI campaigners, Volunteers and RTI Animators of the project. He has also shared the campaigner's guidelines of the project to the participants through question and answering session. In that project orientation, Lamia Sharmin, consultant has shared her work in progress of Shasthya Thatya konika (information rights on reproductive health) and Segufta Yasmin has also deliberated her experiences on working with Krishi Thaytya Konika (information rights on agriculture and land). The orientation program was ended with a concluding remark by Prodip Kumar Roy, CEO of SUPRO with an urge to be involved in campaigning and mobilization activities and work for access to information at all sphere of the society.



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