

Bangladesh Manobadhikar Sangbadik Forum-BMSF
Brief Activity Reports-2005

Background:

Bangladesh Manobadhikar Sangbadik Forum, in short BMSF, was formed in January 10, 1991 with the objective to mobilise the journalists, those working in the national and local print as well as electronic media to facilitate their participation in the national development program activities.

BMSF has a 7-Member elected Executive Committee & 21 General Committee. The President is the organisational head and the Secretary General is the Chief Executive, who also holds the office of the Executive Director. Its members are generally affiliated with the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, the Dhaka Union of Journalists, Dhaka Reporters Unity, National and Divisional Press Clubs and other associations related to journalism in the country.

After being established, BMSF was registered on March 7th 1995 with the Directorate of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Social welfare, Government of Bangladesh.

Members of Networking/Co-ordination body:

International Network:

- Asia Pacific Human Rights Network (APHRN)
- Asia Pacific Media Network against AIDS(APMA)
- Amnesty International
- International Campaign Against Child Trafficking (ICACT)
- South Asian Regional Forum of NGOs on HIV/AIDS, Media & Human Rights
- South Asia Media Solidarity Network's (SAMSN)

National Level Network:

- Co-ordination Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB)
- Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF)
- Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP)
- National STD/AIDS Network, Bangladesh
- Shonghoty

Vision:

An environment, free of Human Rights Violation against Men, Women and Child, that ensures Drugs and HIV/AIDS free society and strengthens the democratic institutions and good governance in Bangladesh.

Mission:

BMSF works to contribute its share in the national development. The organisation mobilises the journalists community in Bangladesh to undertake various development projects and programs that are related to environment, human rights and good governance, press freedom, HIV/AIDS and development of democratic institutions in

Bangladesh with support and in collaboration with the Government, Donors, NGOs and members of the Civil Society.

Goal: Protect & promote human rights, women rights, child rights, good governance & press freedom issues, prevention on HIV/AIDS through media networking & advocacy.

Objectives:

- 1) Develop network with the Journalists community all over the country.
- 2) Capacity building of the network members on Human Rights, Child rights, Women rights, prevention on HIV/AIDS, Good governance issues.
- 3) Continuous Advocacy, Communication, Awareness raising, Campaign program of deference human rights & development issues through Media.
- 4) Develop Information resource centre through ICT Program.

Programs:

BMSF has developed a network establishing linkages with the 613 journalists working at six Divisional Levels namely, Dhaka, Chittagong, Barisal, Khulna, Rajshahi and Sylhet. Involving all the above levels, BMSF implements its various programs in Bangladesh.

These programs include:

- Media Advocacy & Campaign
- Capacity Building
- Networking & Co-ordination
- Information & Communication
- Legal Aid Support linkage
- Development BCC/ IEC Materials
- Research
- Human rights fact-finding

Since its formation, BMSF has been carrying out various activities in accordance with its objectives and policy guidelines. Among these followings are the major activities completed by the organisation during the past years.

- A survey on Repressive Law – 1994
- A Study on Child Trafficking in Bangladesh - 1996
- A Study on Violence against Women- 1997
- Media Campaign on the rights of Sex Workers-1999 to 2004
- Long-term National Parliament Election Monitoring – 2001

BMSF has already undertaken a program to mobilise the HIV/AIDS oriented journalists to strengthening and accelerating the social movement to project and protect human rights issues of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and their effective involvement at various level in response to HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh. The organisation intends to initiate Legal and Media Aid for helping the victims of human rights violation and specially the Journalists Community,

The organisation enhanced its experience and capacity in respect of media advocacy in the areas of HIV/AIDS by taking part in the following workshops:

- Strategic Planning Workshop on HIV/AIDS and Media, organised by BMSF & supported by CCDB in 2002.
- Two Media Advocacy on HIV/AIDS organised by BMSF & supported by VHSS and HASAB, respectively in 1997
- Alternative Dhaka Declaration for UNGAS organised by BMSF & supported by HASAB in 2001
- BMSF acted as Media Focal Point of the National STD/AIDS Network, Bangladesh during 1996-2000

Activities:

A. HIV/AIDS Awareness Raising via Media Program:

The program activities that include:

- Training/workshop for 200 journalists through 10 batches at 6 divisional areas
- Exchanging information on HIV/AIDS/STD through material/ media kits collection and dissemination
- Reporting on partner agencies' activities & other GO. NGO working for HIV/AIDS/STD
- Networking members & resource Journalists data base
- Press conference/briefing and meetings
- Publishing of Newsletter/ Articles/ Photo Feature and Telecast of TV spots on HIV/AIDS
- Co-ordination & Networking with NGOs, CBOs, and Networks at national and regional level

B. Media advocacy on HIV/AIDS & Human rights.

Major activities of this Program include:

- Capacity builds up training/workshop for 400 journalists through 10 batches at 6 divisional areas
- Exchanging information on HIV/AIDS/STD, PLWA and Marginalized Community through material/ media kits collection and dissemination
- Report preparation on Human Rights violation of Marginalized population
- Co-ordination & Networking with NGOs, CBOs, and Networks at national and regional level

C. Information campaign against child trafficking Program:

Major activities of this project include:

- Organize local level advocacy workshop
- Monitoring
- Information Campaign
- Case Study,
- Newsletter, and IEC.

D. Press Freedom in Bangladesh:

BMSF is currently implementing a Programme titled as “Press Freedom in Bangladesh” .

- Exchange Information on Press Freedom in Bangladesh through ICT
- Reporting on Human Rights Fact Finding for the Journalists Issues
- Provide Legal Aid Support for Victim Journalists in Bangladesh with the co-operation Bangladesh Bar Council
- Co-ordination & Networking with NGOs, CBOs, and Networks at national and regional/International level on Press Freedom Issues

E. Media Program on Worst Forms of Child Labour

BMSF is currently implementing a Programme titled as “Media Program on Worst Forms of Child Labour” Supported by Advocacy & Awareness Unit, ILO-IPEC, Bangladesh.

Major activities are:

- Orientated journalists Community.
- Information Campaign on the issues.
- Reporting/Feature Writing/Case Study/Photo Feature on the Issues.
- Co-ordination & Networking with NGOs, CBOs, GOB and Networks at national and regional level.

Outcome:

The HIV/AIDS Awareness raising programs via Media has already produced some encouraging results. Several reports in the central and divisional newspapers and periodicals have been published highlighting the positive aspects of the AIDS situation in the country. Since the beginning of the Training and Refreshers program no report has been published causing violation to the rights of the infected and affected people. Journalists started writing on the NGOs highlighting their activity on HIV/AIDS and the resulting impact among the vulnerable populations and their high-risk behaviours.

Gradually BMSF has been developed as an Information Resource Centre for the Journalist community as they now seek information from BMSF for writing reports/features and articles on HIV/AIDS. District based journalists now send their write ups on HIV/AIDS to BMSF for editing and publishing in the national dailies/weeklies. On the other hand, 6 journalists at six divisions are involved with BMSF as Divisional Co-ordinators and 64 journalists in 64 districts of Bangladesh are now working as Focal Point.

BMSF provided Legal Aid support for the journalists community with the co-operation Bangladesh Bar Council.

Future Plan:

- Creation of a conducive environment for the HIV/AIDS infected and affected people through Media campaign
- Advocacy with law makers for enactment of appropriate law to protect the rights of the people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)
- Promoting Co-operation among the media networks working in the field of HIV/AIDS in the South Asia region.
- Continuation of the HIV/AIDS Awareness Raising via Media program for the Journalists community.
- Promoting human rights and good governance issues through Media Advocacy.
- Prevent Women and Child Trafficking through social vigilance team approach.
- Insure Legal, Ethical and Human Rights support for the journalists' community.

Existing Manpower of BMSF:

- Executive Director (ED)- 01
- Programme Co-ordinator (PC)-01
- Media Relation Co-ordinator (MRC)-01
- Administration Officer-01
- Account Officer-01
- Divisional Co-ordinator-06
- District Co-ordinator/Focal Points-64

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