

PROSHIKA : A Brief

PROSHIKA- A Centre for Human Development, this very name depicts its organizational values and development ideology. PROSHIKA is the acronym of three Bangla words- *Proshikhan (training), Shikhan (education) and Kaj (action)*.

PROSHIKA officially came into existence in 1976. After the liberation war ended 1971, in the wake of that devastation, Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), Logistic Centre Dhaka, was operating relief work in Bangladesh. For better operation of relief work CUSO used to organize the youth groups that were committed to socio-cultural and economic development, and also enlightened with the spirit of the war. Eventually, they realized that relief work was not the permanent solution of socio-economic development of the rural sector. Hence, the idea shifted from the relief work to building up a Bangladeshi organization through which social and economic development work could be implemented making it a social and economic wheel to reach down trodden, poor and destitute people of the country in the most efficient way possible.

Keeping this idea in mind a group of youth decided to setup a Bangladeshi organization, which came to be known as PROSHIKA. It was a Bangladeshi NGO created by the united effort of many committed young people who worked in the CUSO in 1975.

Later, in October 1976 this youth group established PROSHIKA with due permission of the Government and got registration from appropriate authority. Initially, this program was started in *Dhamrai, Bhairab, Ulania, Kotowali* areas of *Dhaka, Kishoregonj, Barisal and Comilla* districts respectively.

Behind the ideas of establishing PROSHIKA were to make a just, secular and a democratic society that will ensure well-being of the poor people.

This ideology encouraged them to build group for both men and women. Along with this, multiple initiatives were also taken to eradicate the prevalent rise of poverty. Some of these being -

- leadership development of the poor people
- road side plantation
- livestock vaccination,
- agriculture and encourage to deposit savings for taking small scale development projects,

In the initial stage, many groups were created having one person in charge who would control the inflow and outflow of money. The savings of all the members of each group would be gathered by the leader and used accordingly for generating income.

The later stages needed to meet the demand of the rapid growth of society and Bangladesh's economy as a whole. To keep up with this ever changing nature of socio-economic issues, PROSHIKA developed its organizational structure and adopted many different development programs in order to stabilize and bring a positive change to the rural life.

At present, PROSHIKA operates through 96 Area Development Centre (ADC) spread 4457 villages and urban slums in 29 districts. It works with 0.03 million people drawn from poor rural and urban households organized into 17035 primary groups. From the inception of PROSHIKA till now, 13 million impoverished; both female and male have so far been rehabilitated in various income generating activities. More than 1.15 million people have attained literacy, 168 thousand got primary medical services and 717 thousand children received primary education during this period; with the active support of PROSHIKA. It also supports 10 million saplings under the country's social afforestation program.



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