

## Program for Development of Differently Able People

One of the main causes of poverty in our country is ignorance about illness and health. Despite the majority of the poor population in Bangladesh, their accessibility existing health facilities and health institutions is very low. They are often found to be heavily indebted to meet frequent medical expenses. PROSHIKA Health Programs aim to create health awareness among the poor, create accessibility to health, support with health information and reduce health vulnerability as 'prevention is better than cure'. It is the most suitable strategy to maintain good health of helpless and poor people. The general objective of this program is to improve the overall health status of the poor; and helping to reduce the incidence of common diseases that affect the poor the most.

One of the main activities of PROSHIKA Health Program is to develop the people with disabilities. Also, as a joint initiative with the health care provider called '*Unnayan Dhara*', breast skinning was started for the women workers of all PROSHIKA development area offices, including the Dhaka central office to increase awareness about breast cancer among rural and urban women.

Disability is a human problem. A total of ten percent of people in our country are suffering from various types of disabilities. Intellectual disability, physical disability, perceptual deficiency, inability to speak and difficulty in normal movement – these are some of the areas of disability. The view of society's neglect of people with disabilities can be seen. There are some disabilities that can be cured. There are many families who neglect children with disabilities and treat them as a burden. This is very sad. Our country does not have enough institutions for the treatment of disabilities. However, the government has launched various schemes to provide assistance to the disabled. Disabled people are benefiting from it. Special facilities have also been arranged in the hospital. PROSHIKA Human Development Center has been implementing programs to assist people with disabilities, especially admissions in educational institutions, distribution of canes (white-stick) and wheelchairs, employment arrangements and medical assistance.

There are plans of PROSHIKA to provide medical care, counseling and other services in the development program of people with disabilities under existing economic and social programs. It should be noted that this program will be integrated with the medical service program of people at the grass root level through PROSHIKA.

Activities implemented under the Program for Development of Differently Able People in the fiscal year 2021-2022 are: Observance of World Disability Day in Central Offices and Development Area offices; conducting disability training; disability identification; providing assistance with money/food and winter clothing

To the disabled or their families during emergencies; identifying and treating cleft- lip and palate disorders; providing white cane to the blind and handicapped; providing crutches and other equipment; provision of wheelchairs among physically challenged people; the disabled are also assisted in obtaining government allowances. Medical checkup and diabetes and blood pressure measurement of contractual workers are also conducted. Under the initiative of the Central Office, a

rally under the leadership of the honorable Chief went out from PROSHIKA *Bhaban* to *Mirpur-1*, with workers of all levels, PROSHIKA participated in the rally.



Rally organized by head office



Distribution of Wheelchairs



Distribution various assistive devices

A training module for training on disability has been developed and distributed to 40 development area offices. A total of 103 persons with disabilities have been identified under this program in PROSHIKA *Jhitka*, *Harirampur*, *Kamta*, *Saturia*, *Dhamrai*, *Phulchhari*, *Rangamati*, *Dasar*, *Mostafapur*, *Kaptai* and *Sakhipur* development areas. Food, money and winter clothes have been provided to 49 disabled families in *Fatikchari*, *Bibirhat*, *Rangamati*, *Dasar*, *Mostafapur* *Phulchhari*, *Gaibandha* PROSHIKA development area offices. Through this program two disabled people of cleft-lip and cleft-palate have been identified and treated in PROSHIKA *Feni* development area office. Five visually impaired persons in *Kamta* and *Saturia* Development Areas have been provided with canes and crutches and other materials to other persons with disabilities. In addition, wheelchairs were provided to 17 physically challenged persons in *Dhamrai*, *Tangail*, *Kamta*, *Saturia*, *Jhitka* and *Harirampur* development areas and also PROSHIKA has assisted in obtaining government allowances to a total of 34 persons with disabilities in *Shalbon*, *Paharika*, *Sakhipur* and other development area offices.

Recently, PROSHIKA has signed a memorandum of understanding with Child Health Awareness to provide treatment for cleft-lip and cleft-palate children. This work is in progress. MoUs have been signed with two institutions for women's breast cancer and health services to provide more medical support under this program. Its activities will be launched in the coming years. In this way, people will be benefited by getting health services through PROSHIKA.

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