

On August 02, 2015 the action researchers from Panchagarh in the north to Shyamnagar (near the Sundarbans) in the south came together at a confluence in RIB to talk of the work they did in inspiring community members especially women to identify their respective problems and strategies collectively in their attempt to overcome them.

Their achievements included the following:

Immediate Outcomes

Almost all groups were able to construct new sanitary latrines or repair old ones specially for the use of women. They achieved this in a variety of ways. Liaising with local authorities, GOs and NGOs and getting their support, getting all group members to save part of the funds and using the fellowship money targeted for group activities, spreading general awareness of health and sanitation in the community to mobilize them into action.

Many groups collaborated to create savings either through mushtichaal or cash (in accordance with the decision of respective groups) which were then used in different activities or by itself had an impact in the community. Poverty stricken Santal households were able to use it in lean season and hence be free of having to be dependent on mahajans(loan sharks) and from having to sell their labor and harvest in advance.

In Joldhaka and Panchagarh, they set up a Kajolicentre (preprimary) through the help of RIB. In Vaina they set up a primary school with the help of BRAC so fulfil the education requirement of all children.

Groups of Joldhaka ,Kishoreganj invited doctors from the health complex to come and feel their health needs and impressed them with their efforts for constructing sanitary latrines.

Munda women met with employers and could negotiate raising their wage from 120 taka per day to 150 taka per day. That was still not equal to what men got, but it was progress.

Women in Nilphamari ensured women's presence in Union Parishad salish and ensured fair justice.

Women in Panchgarh resolved family dispute successfully and as a result set up their own

committee for resolving disputes

Many group members submitted applications to Local authorities under the RTI Act.

Some women took action to prevent early marriage in their village.

For the first time the Robidas community in Saidpur came out of their isolation and held a rally on Independence Day to pay respect to the martyrs of Liberation.

Long term impact

Women learnt to take decisions collectively through discussions

They could unearth many issues that affected women that had thus far been neglected.

Women learnt the art of negotiating with local authorities and other stakeholders and bringing them to meetings in their area. They specifically focused on Union Council members, specifically women councilors, even mayors and local NGOs.