

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Overall objective: Contribute in ending malnutrition of children under five years of age, together with addressing the nutritional needs of pregnant & lactating women and adolescent girls.

Strategic Objective: Improve maternal and child nutrition through implementation of multi-sectoral approaches and strengthened nutritional governance in Nilphamari and Rangpur districts of Northwest Bangladesh.

JANO is replicating proven best practices and taking to scale innovative local governance models for better nutrition. The project is working at the district and sub-district levels, to support the effective implementation of the second National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN-2). JANO is also working at union levels – building local government’s capacity for better nutritional planning, implementation and budgeting for these plans. JANO embraced the concept of multi-sectoral approach and working with the different nutrition sensitive government departments and also private sectors. The project is facilitating them to ensure their services at the community especially for the bottom of the pyramid. Project is also working with the community people for awareness raising about nutritional messages as well as available services around their communities.

Nilphamari

Rangpur



Map of project Location

EXPECTED RESULTS (ERs)

ER 1

Women and adolescent girls in communities, through Community Support Groups are empowered to demand and utilize both nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific services.

ER 2

Coordinated and resourced sub-national and local government structures recognize, respond to, and are accountable to the demand of poor and marginalized communities.

ER 3

Production and access to high value nutritious commodities and services are increased.

ER 4

Information and communication technology (ICT) platform is established at local level to connect relevant govt. departments and increase awareness of community people on nutrition interventions.

BASIC PROJECT INFORMATION

Sector: Food Security and Nutrition

Consortium Partner:

- ▶ CARE Bangladesh
- ▶ PLAN International Bangladesh
- ▶ Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO)

Duration:

- ▶ September 2018 – June 2024

Area of intervention:

- ▶ Two Districts (Rangpur and Nilphamari)
- ▶ 64 unions of 7 upazilas (Gangachara, Kaunia, Taraganj, Domar, Jaldhaka, Kishorgonj & Nilphamari Sadar)

Target Population:

4.3 million population, Including Pregnant and Lactating Women, adolescent girls and children under 5



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Until we are all equal



PROJECT TARGETS



190,322

CHILDREN UNDER FIVE



421,425

ADOLESCENTS



275,415

PREGNANT & LACTATING WOMEN AND MARRIED ADOLESCENT GIRL



10,608

COMMUNITY MEMBERS



243

WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR



247

FAMILY WELFARE ASSISTANTS



198

HEALTH ASSISTANTS



179

SUB-ASSISTANT AGRICULTURE OFFICERS



624

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS



331

SCHOOLS



73

GOVERNMENT NUTRITIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEES



208

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS (FOR 211 COMMUNITY CLINICS)



280

PRIVATE EXTENSION SERVICE PROVIDERS



86

LIVESTOCK EXTENSION WORKERS



49

SUB-ASSISTANT COMMUNITY MEDICAL OFFICERS



63

FAMILY WELFARE VISITORS

DRIVERS TO CHANGE



9,907

COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBERS



624

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS (CSGs)



331

SCHOOLS AND MADRASAS



**2 DNCCs,
7 UNCCs AND
64 UDCCs**



208

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS FROM 208 COMMUNITY CLINICS



280

PRIVATE EXTENSION SERVICE PROVIDERS



01

BNNC system development

- Coordinated and resourced sub-national and local government structures recognize, respond to, and are accountable to the demand of poor and marginalized communities.



06

Agricultural practices climate smart techniques

- 34.5% increase in the number of households practicing climate smart techniques. (Target 25%– Baseline 5%)



02

Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD) increased remarkably

- 51.2% of women have embraced diverse diets, exceeding the 2023 target of 46.9%.
- Pregnant women stand out with an impressive 62.4% meeting dietary standards.
- 73.5% of children aged 6-23 months consumed food from four or more food groups, more than doubling the target (30.2%)



07

Community Support Groups' (CSGs) functionality improved

- Functionality reached 75.8% (60% target) and 330 SMCs continued to actively set agendas for nutrition-specific and sensitive services.



03

UDCC budget allocation increased

- 30% budget increased for nutrition interventions in about 64 Union Parishad.
- Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC) reallocated budget for nutrition interventions surged by 52% from prior years.



08

Feedback mechanism system change

- Feedback mechanisms have been maintained, with 84% of respondents expressing satisfaction with services provided by various government departments and platforms.



04

Women empowerment towards seeking medical services

- 72.3% of women and girls claimed services from community clinics (Target 53.5%– Baseline 35.5%)



09

Homestead gardening collaborative effort with government and private sector

- Cultivation of higher-value nutrition products by 61.5% of households.
- 13 of initiative jointly taken as a result of tripartite engagement.



05

Adolescent learning utilizing in the practical areas of life

- 50.7% students applying 5 key learning points at home (Target 15.4%-Baseline 0%)
- Increased the percentages of students applying key learning on nutrition, health, and hygiene- 50.7% (target 15.4%)



10

ICT based elearning application Improved and widely adopted

- Benefiting 41.3% government frontline workers and volunteers who support the community's needs.
- 44.1% of households received ICT-based nutrition information, significantly higher than in previous years.

Total reached: 1.48 million people

JANO PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

Women and Adolescent Nutrition

- ▶▶ 50.7% of students applied key learning points regarding nutrition, health & hygiene (0.15% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 72.3% of women and adolescent have claimed nutrition specific services from relevant service providers (35.5% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 30.8% of women and adolescent have claimed nutrition sensitive services from relevant service providers (3.9% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 75.8% of CSGs in targeted communities are functional (0% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 330 School Management Committees set agendas for nutrition (7 at baseline)

Nutrition Governance

- ▶▶ 2 DNCC, 14 UNCC, 64 UDCC have allocated budgets to support nutrition
- ▶▶ 22.7% increase of PLW (pregnant and lactating mother) received nutrition-specific safety net support (8.4% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 50% of women and adolescent girls meaningfully participated in government forums (0.2% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 64 UPs & 208 CCs in the target districts which allow effective feedback mechanisms for service receivers.

Climate Smart Agriculture and Private Public Partnership

- ▶▶ 61.5% households involved in the production of higher value nutrition products (36.7% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 34.5% of households are practicing climate smart agricultural techniques (5% at baseline)
- ▶▶ 13 initiatives jointly taken as a result of tripartite engagement (0 at baseline)




ICT4Nutrition:

- ▶▶ Web-based platform developed and Govt officials started using the platform
- ▶▶ 100% of volunteers and 28% of frontline workers using the ICT based e-learning platform.
- ▶▶ 44.1% community members received ICT based nutritional information (4.2% at baseline)

SYSTEM LEVEL CHANGE

-  Community Support Groups and School Management Committees remain highly functional and align well with project objectives.
-  Adolescent corners and clubs functioning well, used as learning hub, replicated learning to other adolescents creating greater impact.
-  Women entrepreneurs linking themselves with other product supply chains.
-  BNNC is in the process of deploying the online M&E system in 44 districts.
-  UDCC has proven a functional platform for bridging gaps between different sub-district level platforms and communities. Governance platforms are becoming more proactive.
-  Existence of proactive efforts of national and sub-national nutritional governance platforms, and they are independently reviewed their prior year's activities, developed the new nutrition action plan
-  These platforms are taking the lead in organizing events to promote nutrition (e.g. nutrition fair, awareness campaigns).
-  Furthermore, the platform's bi-monthly meetings maintained high attendance with a positive shift in their behavior.
-  Fostering an agricultural environment that enhances nutritional value and incorporates climate-smart practices, achieved through effective engagement with government departments and private sector companies.
-  Regular community meetings and workshops for networking and coordination facilitated cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge exchange. These meetings are also working as a business promotion tool for the women entrepreneurs.
-  The establishment of high-value nutritious commodity-focused demonstration plots supported to empower farmers, foster better agricultural practices, and strengthen collaborations between stakeholders.
-  Cooking demonstrations in community and schools reached thousands of community members to promote diversified and enriched nutritional intake. Cooking demos also helped bring back and preserve traditional food habits.

LESSONS LEARNED

-  Effectiveness/impact of eLearning apps needs to be observed over time. Possible challenge as limited project time remaining.
-  The current private sector engagement modalities have limited flexibility for risk-taking and expanding their supply chain to remote areas.
-  Need separate budget from ministry or department to achieve the set indicators mentioned in NPAN-2.

Mukta's Moringa Miracle

Some of the most common topics prevalent in the area where Mukta lives were child marriage, lack of nutritional food and vaccinations and other health issues including checkups for pregnant and lactating mothers and nutritious food.

JANO volunteers were trying to gather some interested women to propagate messages on these topics and a local theatrical play was organized to raise interest. The play by JANO focused on the issue of child marriage and a telephone number was provided to people attending the performance. This provided locals with a process to follow in case they heard of or knew of a child marriage happening.

Mukta joined a Community Support Group (CSG), as she was interested in getting involved, and the members were informed about child marriage as well as

made aware of the benefits of moringa leaves, which the locals had never considered earlier.

They learned how moringa leaves can be ground up into a paste, and that even the oil extract is great for reducing pains and other ailments. They had only ever used moringa leaves with a mixture of other greens in a local delicacy called Pelka. They were informed of how this traditional preparation was ruining the health benefits of moringa, locals use soda in the dish, which kills the main properties of moringa – a concept that Mukta took very seriously. Mukta previously grew Moringa trees but was unaware of the many benefits of this superfood. Ever since then, she has been informing her neighbors and community people about the benefits of moringa (Sajna), which she lists off: from helping control high blood pressure, to having iron and magnesium and other minerals and vitamins, to helping victims with a tendency of heart ailment. Mukta is well versed in the super food qualities of moringa.

“ Since learning about this tree's numerous benefits, I started liking it more, and I'm so happy that I can grow and consume plenty of it! ”

Mukta also described the several examinations and follow-ups that a pregnant woman needs, as well as how to access these medical services through JANO to the community clinic.

“ We talk about these topics in these clinics throughout our meetings. But we share this information by word-of-mouth. I go out on a round and talk to the women whenever I have free time ”

As a proactive member of the CSG, Mukta makes extensive use of the knowledge she acquired from JANO. A volunteer for JANO named Santona Rani went around seeking out women who would take the initiative and actively participate. In every neighborhood or para, there was always at least one woman who exhibited the appropriate kind of initiative.

A woman wearing a yellow patterned headscarf and a yellow top is smiling and holding a baby in a red and white outfit. The background is a soft-focus green outdoor setting.

ASMA'S JOURNEY WITH JANO'S

Talking Book: Empowering Motherhood through Innovation

Asma Akhter, 32, is a mother of two living in Nilphamari Sadar Upazila with her husband and mother-in-law. Her second child is now twenty-eight months old, and her elder child is fourteen years old. When Asma became pregnant after 12 years, she was very careful during her pregnancy. As a member of JANO community level group, she attended regular group meeting from which she learned about a tool called Talking Book.

Talking Book is an interactive e-learning tool. It is an audio device that can hold a library of informational audio guided by different icon-based button where project participants can choose the topics that interest them most, replay content as often as they want. This was interesting for her, because she could receive useful information through songs, which were easy to remember and could be replayed as many times as needed to memorize them. She learned some vital information about pregnant mother which she used in real life. Like her, other women in the community listened to the Talking Book with interest and delight. Later, Asma learned from volunteers that the Talking Book contains information not only for pregnant mothers, but also for lactating mothers, adolescent boys and girls, and others. From the Talking Book, Asma learned about key check-ups during and after pregnancy, which foods to eat during and after pregnancy, and much more.

As a Lactating mother, Asma used to listen to the messages of the Talking Book to ensure her and her child Aaraf's health and nutrition. Earlier, she felt shy asking for information twice if she, for example, did not understand a discussion or missed hearing information from volunteers in a courtyard meeting. After introducing the Talking Book, Asma can now listen to key messages as often as she wants.

“ The talking book has helped me get very useful information during and after my pregnancy. The melody of the song is enjoyable, and it is not boring to listen to it many times. ”

Asma added, “JANO project is doing a lot of important activities for the improvement of Nutritional status of mother and children in this area. Among these, courtyard sessions and household visits by community volunteers are one the most important activities. Pregnant and lactating mothers, children, adolescents of our area have come to know about health and nutrition-based information through JANO. The talking book of JANO is specially helping them to gain knowledge through this ICT based e-Learning tool.”

COMPOST CATALYST

Radhika's Success

Radhika Rani, 36, and her husband Mohine, 45, along with their sons, Sonaton and Krusho, initiated a compost business following training from JANO project funded by the European Union and the Austrian Development Cooperation. They originally sell compost locally, but their business expanded nationwide, transforming their lives.

The family, formerly using their livestock's cow dung, now collects from neighboring farms due to increased demand. The compost creation involves sieving dung, introducing worms, and selling both the fertilizer and worms. With 10 ring containers and shelter from CARE, the family received essential support to kickstart their venture. The family sells 1 kg of fertilizer for 10 Taka (0.1 US-Dollar) and 1 kg of worms for around 12 US dollars (1327 BDT).

"The process to make good fertilizer is easy. Everyone can learn it, man, woman, elderly," says Radhika. "When come the worms, they digest the dung, and their castings become fertilizer. The worms also reproduce, and we can sell them alongside the ready fertilizer. The compost differs from traditional fertilizers, avoiding harmful insects." explains Mohine.



"We had the training with JANO and now we can do it ourselves. We also received 10 ring containers and shelter from CARE to start our new business," explains Mohine.

Sonaton (19), utilized marketing, gaining 5,000 followers on Facebook and expanding the business beyond expectations. The family's economic situation improved significantly, leading to a larger house and plans for further expansion.

Their success inspired neighbors to start similar businesses, fostering economic growth in the community. Mohine proudly acknowledges the positive impact, stating, "We are changing our community," as neighbors adopt their methods and embark on their entrepreneurial journeys. The business has changed Radhika's family, and they are also changing the lives of the community.

"We are inspired by Radhika's family. Now we all can get a good income through producing fertilizer,"
A neighbor says.

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For further queries

Dr. Md. Mizanur Rahman

Senior Team Leader, JANO Project
Email: mizanur.rahman2@care.org

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