NOBO JATRA - NEW BEGINNING
USAID’s Development Food Security Activity

Issue -12
Newsletter
September 2019 – February 2020

• Nobo Jatra at a glance
• Early response during Cyclone Bulbul
• Seeking sustainability
• Policy Win
• Partnering for entrepreneurship
Agriculture & Alternative Livelihoods

- 30,869 farmers practicing Climate Smart Agriculture
- 23,529 men and women involved in Income Generation Activities
- 1,640 Village Savings and Lending Associations with average additional incomes of $59 per month.

Gender

- 46 Child Protection Committees active
- 7 child marriages stopped
- 5,311 adolescents trained in Life Skills Education
- 1,642 couples participating in Male Engagement for Gender Equality sessions

Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN)

- 16,229 pregnant and lactating women completed the 15 month cycle of Conditional Cash Transfers
- 26,668 children under 2 reached via Growth Monitoring Promotion
- 12,892 children under 2 provided Micro Nutrient Powder

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- 400 water and sanitation committees functional
- 40,148 people gained access to basic drinking water
- 9,593 people gained access to safe sanitation
- 10 Reverse Osmosis Plants providing 20,000 households with safe drinking water

Ultra-Poor Graduation

- 5,740 households have food security
- 6,557 women have graduated from extreme poverty
  - 99.5% of these households have minimum two sources of income, average income $54/month
  - 99.5% have savings in Village Savings and Lending Associations or banks
  - 83% using a safe drinking water source and safe sanitation facilities
  - 100% of eligible Ultra Poor Graduation Households had no instances of child marriage

Nobo Jatra at a glance
Nobo Jatra at a glance

Disaster Risk Reduction

- **17,249** community people trained and have developed household level disaster preparedness plans
- **1,632** youth volunteers trained on Search, Rescue and First Aid
- **84%** Union Disaster Management Committees implementing risk reduction plans, early warning and disaster response functions
- **40** Union Disaster Management Committees provided DRR early warning and emergency response tool kits.

Good Governance and Social Accountability

- **100%** (13) Union Parishad Standing Committees activated
- **622** Village Development Committees implementing Community Development Plans
- **73%** (29) of Union Parishad’s incorporated budget for water tanks and sanitary latrines
- **42%** (50) Community Clinics have improved water facilities
- **24%** (29) have safe sanitation services

Early response during Cyclone Bulbul

CYCLONE BULBUL hit the coast of Bangladesh with fierce gales and torrential rain on 10 November. In the worst-hit areas, trees were ripped from the ground, blocking roads and hampering access to the area. With USAID support, World Vision’s Nobo Jatra project coordinated with Disaster Management Committees and worked with thousands of trained community and Government volunteers in four sub districts in southwest Bangladesh: Dacope and Koyra in Khulna district and Shyamnagar and Kaliganj in Satkhira district. Project staff and volunteers immediately deployed on the ground, moving door-to-door and using loudspeakers to urge people living in vulnerable low lying areas to move to cyclone shelters. Early, coordinated action resulted in 204,000 people taking refuge in 483 cyclone shelters – thus saving lives and significantly reducing the number of casualties.
Internal and external visits

A team of 20 students and teachers from Carleton College, Minnesota, USA were on ground in southwest Bangladesh to visit communities supported by Nobo Jatra. The students were able to interact with project participants and observe gender equitable practices at the household level. Understanding local context and observing changes first hand helped the students understand how USAID is working with World Vision to advance self-reliance and sustainability objectives - with local communities and systems as the driving force behind positive change.

YouTube links:

USAID’s Youth Power Action visited Nobo Jatra working areas to understand how Development Food Security Activities integrate youth into programming and recommend strategies for stronger youth focused programming. Link: https://bit.ly/3aDrogf

World Vision Bangladesh Senior Management Team and the Cox’s Bazaar EFSP team visited Nobo Jatra working areas with the aim to promote intra organizational learning and knowledge transfer. Learnings that have the greatest applicability include strong partnerships, private sector engagement, use of technology, strong M&E, research and adaptive management and peer to peer replication.
External Engagement

The Nobo Jatra Chief of Party spoke at the IDEAL event ‘Field Voices: Implementing Adaptive, Integrated and Sustainable Programs’ in Washington DC on 16 October 2019. Concepts of sustainability, integrated programming, and adaptive management in food security and nutrition activities were shared.

Link: https://bit.ly/2x8XpOU

Nobo Jatra project, took part in a two day Social Security Conference and Knowledge Fair organized by the Cabinet Division and General Economics Division. The event convened over 20 Government Ministry’s implementing social safety nets along with INGO’s, academia and the private sector where the key themes included digitalization of e payments, a single registry MIS for safety nets and financial inclusion - all of which Nobo Jatra closely aligns with. Nobo Jatra disseminated its works through a market place and attended different sessions. Honorable Speaker of Bangladesh National Parliament Ms. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury visited Nobo Jatra’s stall and expressed appreciation for the on going partnership with the Government of Bangladesh.

National Level Dialogue on Community Clinics in South West Bangladesh: World Vision Bangladesh, in partnership with Community Based Health Care (CBHC) of the Government of Bangladesh hosted a National Dialogue ‘Community Clinics in south west Bangladesh: Opportunities and Challenges’. Citizen led data, facilitated by USAID’s Nobo Jatra project, on the quality of services in 119 Community Clinics in Khulna and Satkhira districts was shared and validated by local service providers from the clinics, divisional level authorities and CBHC decision makers at the central level. Remarkable changes are already visible in clinics; 100% of clinics have active community groups and community support groups and 100% of clinics also have action plans. Government key decision makers committed to prioritize and replicate recommendations from World Vision’s work with community clinics across the country.

Seeking Sustainability

Nobo Jatra signed an MoU with Social Marketing Company (SMC) to develop health service providers at the community level to ensure that basic health services continue to reach communities.
Seeking Sustainability

Nobo Jatra has partnered with Social Marketing Company, a private sector actor, to ensure that quality health and nutrition services are available in south west Bangladesh and a functioning, locally led system is in place. As part of the model, 100 community nutrition volunteers, Government National Services volunteers and mothers known as Gold Star Members are trained and provided health and nutrition products who are providing fee based services and selling nutrient supplements, oral saline, menstruation products, pregnancy test strips and contraceptives in their local communities.

The Ministry of Education issued a letter to the Education office of Khulna and Satkhira to continue and support Life Skill Based Education Sessions (LSBE) in the secondary schools. The letter also ensured that, secondary schools in Nobo Jatra working areas will mainstream the LSBE as part of the Governments existing portfolio for extra-curricular activities in secondary schools.

Policy Win

Community Based Health Care’s (CBHC) approval of 600 Multi-Purpose Volunteer (MPV) in Nobo Jatra working areas: As a major milestone, 600 Multi-Purpose Volunteers (MPVs) have been approved by CBHC for the 4 sub districts covered by Nobo Jatra. Each community clinic (122 in total) will have 5 MPVs who will earn a monthly income ranging from $36-48 per month and will support health promotion including Growth monitoring and Promotion sessions, Severe Acute Malnutrition referrals, immunizations and raise awareness around family planning methods, nutrition and common diseases. This is a major opportunity to sustain the health and nutrition services and outreach provided by Nobo Jatra – and Community Nutrition/WASH Facilitators, lead mothers and interested project participants are being encouraged to apply for the positions.

Social Media Spotlight

Link: https://bit.ly/2WVA6T7
Day Observation

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<tr>
<th>DAYS</th>
<th>STAKEHOLDERS</th>
<th>EVENTS</th>
<th>VISIBILITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Hand Washing Day</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Art competition</td>
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<td>National Girl Children Day and Child Marriage Elimination Day 2019</td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
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<td>International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR)</td>
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<td>Rally</td>
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<td>World Toilet Day</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Folk songs</td>
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<td>16 days activism to eliminate gender based violence</td>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>Debates</td>
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<td>National Youth Day 2019</td>
<td>Youth groups</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Begum Rokeya Day-2019</td>
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<td>Special class at school</td>
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USAID supporting couples through male engagement for gender equality

“Before Nobo Jatra,” says Parbati, “I didn’t imagine our relationship could be like this.”

Only 4% of women in Bangladesh participate in economic activities outside the home, compared to 70% of men. National average data from the Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey in 2014 indicated that for 13.1% of women, the husband controlled their cash earnings. It is in this context that USAID’s Nobo Jatra activity, implemented by World Vision works to improve immediate gender relations between couples. One way the project does this is by involving husbands and wives, like Jayantha and Parbati Das in Male Engagement sessions.

Like many couples living in southwest Bangladesh – and indeed, around the world – Jayantha didn’t always value Parbati’s work around the home and for their children. After attending Nobo Jatra’s Male Engagement sessions, things have transformed.

“My husband has changed a lot,” says Parbati. “He helps take care of our child. He takes him to school. He helps in the household, especially when I am sick. He never did this in our last four years of married life”.

Sessions are staggered over 9 months and 12 couples meet with a facilitator every 15 days. Best of all, facilitators report that the couples become catalysts, sharing their knowledge with others in the area and also set a good example to their own children.

“Think about a bicycle,” says Jayantha. “It has two wheels. If one wheel is damaged or leaky, it won’t work anymore. The husband and wife are like the wheels of the bicycle. If someone doesn’t feel happy, the household could be damaged.”

With USAID’s support, Nobo Jatra has helped over 7,000 couples like Jayantha and Parbati, to improve relationships and understand the risks of child marriage. When Nobo Jatra first started implementing, only 8% of men thought that they should share household and child care tasks. Today, almost 60% say that husbands and wives should work together on household chores and caregiving for children.

The impact of male engagement sessions is also visible in the wider community. 9.5% of girls aged between 12-17 years were married in 2017 which is 7.6% in 2019 - showing a 1.9% reduction in early marriage rates. This reduction is due to a number of factors and combined efforts – however, male engagement sessions have also played a role in reducing the practice of child marriage.


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