

Gender and Water Alliance Bangladesh

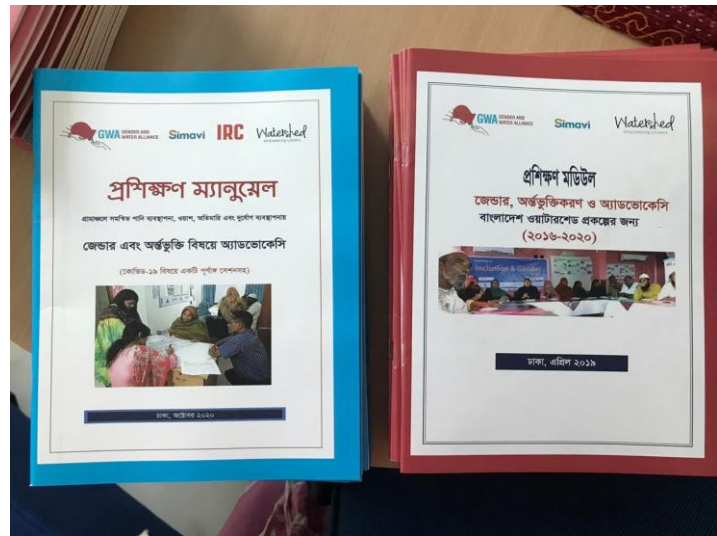
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Legacy Challenge Fund Watershed Report Watershed Outreach for Gender and Social Inclusion in Bangladesh

Towards the end of the Watershed, Empowering Citizens project, there is space for a few extra activities. One of these is the Translation of Watershed training and coaching manuals related to Gender and Inclusion into Bangla, and further dissemination to CSOs in all districts of Bangladesh, for them to learn and apply. GWA has more than 250 members in Bangladesh, of whom about 180 are heads of district based NGOs. To make the material, developed within the Watershed project available to them will result in many more empowered citizens. The documents were originally developed for the island Bhola (mostly in English), but can be useful for the whole of Bangladesh, and much more so if translated into Bangla. Due to the specific context of limited mobility during the crisis of COVID-19, person to person coaching was not an option, instead the implementation is following the rules on the government of Bangladesh. This was already foreseen in the plan.

Implementation:

1. The Watershed Gender and Inclusion Coaching Manual for Advocacy in WASH and IWRM has been translated into Bangla. This manual also has included two extra sessions on Covid-19 and on Disaster Management which are contemporary, relevant, and will be useful for rural CSO members all over the country. GWA has written it in a practical and participatory way describing the process of relatively short sessions, in which still a lot of subjects can be clarified, for people who did not have many educational opportunities. It is to be used at union level, by small and medium CSOs for CBOs. The document turns out to be 73 pages.



2. The Bangla documents were included in the GWA website.
<http://genderandwater.org/en/bangladesh/watershed-empowering-citizens/gender-inclusion-and-advocay-training-module-in-bangla/view>
<http://genderandwater.org/en/bangladesh/watershed-empowering-citizens/gender-coaching-manual-watershed-bangla-2020/view>
<http://genderandwater.org/en/bangladesh/watershed-empowering-citizens/watershed-gwa-policy-brief-gesi-in-bangla/view>

500 copies of each of the Bangla Gender, Inclusion, WASH and IWRM documents (3+letter) were printed:

- a. Watershed Gender and Inclusion Coaching Manual for Advocacy in WASH and IWRM

- b. Training Module on Gender, Inclusion and Advocacy for the Watershed Project, Bangladesh
 - c. Policy Brief: Gender and Inclusion in WASH and IWRM
 - d. Letter, explaining the process and inviting phone calls to discuss their use.
3. Four Watershed partner organisations in Bangladesh were asked if they also had documents in Bangla which we could also have printed and send to all GWA members. They did not have such documents, which could be relevant for other districts. But DORP informed us that they would like to receive 120 copies of each, for their other projects like Water and Life (Pani O Jibon) in Khulna, for their various offices in the country, and government offices such as DPHE, BWDB, and LGED. GWA Members were beforehand sent a letter, explaining the documents and how to use them, and asked if they would prefer to have digital versions only, after which a handful answered that they do not need hard copies. All others found hard copies useful for their NGOs. So far 380 (out of five hundred) hard copies of the manuals and fact sheet were sent by postal and courier to all nooks and corners of Bangladesh, with the majority to the coastal belt (Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Jessore, Barishal). Not only the members but also GWA's many partners with whom we have worked together, received these sets of training materials. A letter in Bangla was accompanying the documents, with again a clear explanation of the use of the different items. Various (about 40) phone calls followed, with members asking about details of how to use the manuals and asking for some more copies for their other offices, training centres, trainers, and young women and boys groups who can easily read and teach others. This is all still ongoing.

Reflection:

The use and fluency of English in Bangladesh is decreasing over the years, and of course development work at grassroots' level happens in the mother tongue. Especially in such a large population, with a language which worldwide is the third mother tongue (after English and Spanish), it is in all aspects logical to write documents in Bangla, or otherwise translate them. GWA-B has found it cumbersome to translate documents, because Bangladeshi are very proud of their language, rightly so, but it often leads to long discussions about the use of words and grammar, causing delay. This time the response from members was very positive. Those members who are fluent in English replied by email expressing their gratitude, and especially that the Coaching Manual can be used by their community workers, who don't have access to many helpful papers. Others telephoned to our office, to Runia, most of them commented on this activity of GWA as: "this document is as written in easy Bangla, easy to read and to understand by people of all education levels, including rural CSO members and trainers."

