

Naripokkho
Women Health and Rights Advocacy Project (WHRAP)
Semi Annual Report
April - July 2003

The role of Naripokkho in establishing women health and women's rights through various activities is well known and well acclaimed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh. Naripokkho has in various action plan and analytical meetings highlighted its experiences derived from analysis of health problems of rural women through its past activities. Naripokkho had received international recognition for its work or the use of Norplant prior to the ICPD Conference. As a result of this, the Government of Bangladesh recognised Naripokkho's activities on women health and included its representation both during the preparatory period and occurrence of the ICPD Conference. On the basis of this a project was undertaken with financial assistance from Ford Foundation to highlight the existing condition of reproductive health of women which was implemented with the help of local NGOs in five Upzillas including Bandarban, Rajshahi, Manikgonj, Sariakandi and Patharghata.

Under the ICPD Follow-up Project, the regional health officials and executives of Patharghata have shown exemplary work in the improvement of women health. In spite of being an Upazila, there is a municipality at Patharghata. Naripokkho had worked in joint collaboration with a local non-government development organisation named "Sankalpa Trust" for this project. This non-government organisation named "Sankalpa Trust" is a member of the Upazila Health Improvement Committee (UHIC). 'Sankalpa Trust' had in the meantime organised a training programme on the reproductive health and rights of women with the municipality members and the students of different schools and colleges.

It is on the line of the ICPD follow-up project and implementation of a project named "Ensuring Accountability of the Local Health Authorities and Health Service Providers to People, especially Women in Bangladesh" as part of the "Gender, Citizenship and Governance" project. For the third time Naripokkho is jointly working with Sankalpa Trust in Patharghata Upazilla for it is being expected that under this project, local health service management will help in improved service to build up a future model for development of women reproductive health, adolescent health, increase access to health service of

women including young women for ensuring safe motherhood. At the same time Naripokkho will provide technical support to 10 CBOs of Patuakhali and Borguna district for effective monitoring of the local hospital and health services including Emergency Obstetric Care (EOC) services which will create accountability in the health management system of the country and provide enduring health services for the women and strengthening of Emergency Obstetric Care (EOC) services. Naripokkho will ensure school and collage health programme through different education committees by ensuring availability of and access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information to adolescents and young women of Bangladesh. Under this project, the regional health and education management facilities at Patharghata will create a co-ordinated system in the development of women reproductive health which will improve safe delivery that inturns influence the progress of national health in future. Naripokkho expects to carry on its present advocacy project, WHRAP from the strong foundation built by the past ICPD follow-up and Health Accountability project.

Goal : Enhance quality of life in relation to sexuality and reproduction for women and youths in Bangladesh.

Objectives :

A)

- Ensure Emergency Obstetric Care (EOC) services in all upazila in Bangladesh.
- Availability of services for Adolescent (YW) and increase access to SRHR information, in the Government Institution.
- To make the Health Authorities, service providers, policy makers more gender sensitive.

B)

- Building capacity of CBOs on proper monitoring of the local health & education sectors.

Main strategy for achieving Objective:

- Increase awareness at various levels (among doctors of the health-service providing organisations, related officials and employees at Upazila level, local journalists, rural doctors, municipality members, U.P. members, women group, policy makers and the high officials) on the issues of reproductive health, safe motherhood, responsibility of the males, abuse of women, Violence Against Women, gender, cleanliness, behavioural changes etc.
- Facilitate the monitoring and collection of information by the local NGO and CBOs and compilation, analysis, preparation and dissemination of reports on local health and EOC services.
- Regulate the Upazila Health Advisory Committee (UHAC) to improve the existing hospital and EOC services.
- Building capacity of CBOs to hold the health service providers accountable.
- Maintain liaison with the Ministry of Health, Department of Health and Ministry of Education for ensuring supply.

Main activities:

- Consciousness raising through training workshops.
- Identification of barriers on ensuring safe motherhood and strengthening EOC services.
- Collect information and carry out research on problems relating to women and adolescent health, monitoring EOC services in the hospital/health Complexes, publish information and prepare reports.

- Technical support to the local NGO, CBOs and Upazila Health Advisory Committee (UHAC).
- Renewing advocacy linkages with Ministry of Health, Department of Health and Ministry of Education at the national level.
- Documentation and dissemination of information at the local, national and international level.

Activities performed during April to July, 2003 under the project :

Administrative :

- GOB Clearance:** The approval of the NGO Affairs Bureau, Government of Bangladesh for receipt of foreign funds for WHRAP came through on 26 July 2003 nearly two months after the application was submitted.
Naripokkho has arranged a separate account for WHRAP project.
- Staff Recruitment:** As of 1 April 2003, Naripokkho has employed two project officers and one documentation officer for the project office in Dhaka (actually the staff were transferred to WHRAP project from Naripokkho's previous "Health Accountability" project) and has made arrangements for the employment of two research assistants under the auspices of Sankalpa, the partner NGO in Patharghata.
- Staff Orientation:** The Project Working Group composed of six Naripokkho members including the honorary Project Coordinator met once a month at least with the project staff. They discuss, do follow-up of the regular project activities, provide inputs and direction. The project Coordinator has a regular touch on project activities and ensures supports to the project staff.
- Participation of the two project officers in the planning meeting at ARROW in May 2003 .there they conceptualised the whole project theme and participate in preparing work plan and budget for the project

- e) **Communication with the partner NGO:** Naripokkho intends to implement WHRAP in partnership with a local NGO, Sankalpa. An MOU between Naripokkho and Sankalpa was signed on 10th June 2003 to guide the collaboration between the two organisations in the implementation of WHRAP.

Project related activity:

- a) **Field visit and introduction of WHRAP locally:** Project staff visited two times in project site areas (Pathorghata, Borguna and Potuakhali) in April & June 2003. There they met with Sankalpa Trust, CBOs, other stakeholders and local administration. They exchanged views on women, adolescents health and rights, status of local health and EOC services, Violence Against Women, citizen participation, health service monitoring and introduction of WHRAP project.
- b) **Communication with CBOs and their selection:** Naripokkho and Sankalpa have had introductory meetings with 14 CBOs located in the Patuakhali and Borguna districts. Ten of these were short-listed for WHRAP on the basis of their experience with the health issues. Six CBOs were selected from Potuakhali and Four from Borguna. These organisations were given a questionnaire to guide the monitoring of the local health complex. All of them have carried out initial observation of their local health facility and sent the information to Naripokkho. They are doing regular monitoring of their local health services, participating in improving health services for women.
- c) **Introduction of WHRAP nationally:** Naripokkho arranged a national dissemination meeting of its previous project on "**Ensuring Accountability of Local Health Authority and Service Providers to People, Specially to Women**" with national policy makers on 29 July, 2003 in CIRDAP auditorium, Dhaka. Honourable health Minister of the Bangladesh Govt. was the chief guest, Member of Parliament (MP) Boguna -2 was presided over the meeting, MP from Pirogpur - 3, Boguna - 3 were the special guests. High officials from Ministry of Health, Department of Health, Journalists, members

of local administration, members of UHAC, Pathorghata and members of Naripokkho were present in that meeting. In this meeting Naripokkho presented information achieved from the project and field experiences **on women health and rights** in front of the policy makers and took part in discussion. Finally Naripokkho prepared a recommendation and will submit it to Ministry of Health.

Ongoing activities :

- a) **Collection of information by the NGO & CBOs:** on Pathorghata EOC services and Upazila health complexes are going on under a guide line questioner. Two field research assistants are visiting Upazila Health Complex, EOC services, school & collages daily. They took part in the regular health classes of health complex, monthly meeting of the providers, monthly meeting of UHAC, monthly meeting of Upazila Education Committee (UEC), making liaison with the CBOs in Boguna and Potuakhali and maintain a daily diary. Naripokkho project staff & Sankalpa notices about the problems related to health services in the UHAC meeting for the local solution.
- b) **Meeting with CBOs:** Sankalpa and Naripokkho are making liaison with CBOs, collecting and analysing information sent by the CBOs, assessing local health service status including EOC services, status of women health and status of UHAC for effective monitoring of health services and to improve health status of women in their locality.
- c) **Questionnaire on white discharge :** A questionnaire was developed on white discharge (leucorrhoea). It is a very common suffering of women of Bangladesh. Already field test done. It will be introduced in the field this month.
- d) **Follow-up of UHAC & UEC:** This two committee are very effective for monitoring and ensuring health and educational services in the locality. They work for improving the services by solving local problems and send recommendations to the higher authority which are not possible to solve by the local effort. Naripokkho identifies the two committee as a potential resource for establishing the women and adolescent SRHR.

- e) **Regular monitoring of health services, educational institutions and follow-up of UHAC & UEC by the local NGO and CBOs**

Future work : (for coming 6 month)

- a) **Develop a Questionnaire on EOC monitoring** : A questionnaire will be developed on EOC monitoring of Patharghata Health Complex. It has to be mentioned here that EOC services has newly introduced in Patharghata health complex.
- b) **Data collection, Data compilation and analysis :**
- c) **Collection of secondary data :**
- d) **Workshop with CBOs** : Naripokkho will arrange workshop with CBOs for effective health service monitoring and to regularise UHAC & UEC meeting to make them effective.
- e) **Meeting with different stakeholders :**
- f) **Attend ARROW's capacity building training on policy advocacy:**
- g) **Documentation of the whole process :**