

Reducing Hunger Among Poor Citizens: Lessons from Bangladesh

(Creating a Harmonic Society by Helping People)



Division of Research



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Background

On completion of Millennium Development Goals in 2015, there has been a transformation to a set of 17 precise agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for attention to the global communities. In that context, the United Nations aimed to strengthen the capacities of the developing countries to deliver on the SDGs' promises to finish up the remaining business of MDGs. The present statistics in relation to SDG 2 (No Hunger) indicates that nearly 690 million people are hungry which may be reduced in the next five years by nearly 60 million [1]. So, the world is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030. The potential impact of COVID 19 crises has made it more challenging. In this situation the Food and Agriculture Organization urges the countries to meet the immediate food needs of their vulnerable populations and boost social protection programs.

In the light of the pandemics' effect, the government of Bangladesh took a lot of initiatives to mitigate the vulnerable situation and risk and has been successful in doing that to a great extent as we have perceived from the society around. Daffodil International University has always been a promising institution to support the national agenda of the government. During the COVID 19 pandemic, the university conducted several events for distribution of food among the local disadvantaged citizens and supporting their livelihood through self-employment. Moreover, Health and Medical services were also arranged for the poor people.

Distribution of Several Items of Bulk Food

To celebrate the achievement of its first position among Bangladeshi universities in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings-2021, Daffodil International University distributed "A bag of happiness- Bulk Food Items" among 3000 poor people of different places of Bangladesh maintaining properly the social distancing and health guidelines. The photo below presents the occasion at the Daffodil Smart City, Ashulia.

[1] <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>



A Bag of Happiness is such an initiative that Daffodil International University initiated to celebrate DIU's achievement of the top position among universities ranked from Bangladesh and within top 400 among global universities. The ranking measures the participated university's achievement for contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In the photo below, an elderly citizen was receiving the bag a few employees of the university.



Due to the COVID-19 situation, a lot of people have lost their jobs and are now leading a miserable life. Bearing this in mind, DIU took the innovative way of

celebrating its global rankings achievement through distributing a bag of happiness containing daily necessities of a family like: rice, potato, lentil, oil, onion, sugar, Lassa semai etc.



It was an honor and pride moment for the DIU to share the achievement with the art of celebration and took the initiative to make it more memorable through distributing 3000 bags of happiness with 3000 families. Our objective was to do support the livelihood of the poor people in the society. The way of celebration of the achievement of the rankings was also very impactful towards the society.



Besides, DIU and Daffodil Family also distributed "A bag of happiness" among its Office Staff (Below Officer grade), Drivers, Security guards and cleaning staff.

Donation for Self-employment

In Bangladesh, microcredit approaches of financing in the form of loans with interest are considered to be a suitable strategy for poverty reduction. However, we have perceived that a lot of people have lost their assets in the process of recovery of principal amount as well as the excessive interests imposed on them. The Chairman, Board of Trustees of Daffodil International University Dr. Sabur Khan changed this traditional practice by adopting a notion of non-refundable funding services in a systematic manner. Without distributing cash money, they provided the poor people with several self-employment stuff according to their abilities and experiences for example, Rickshaw, Animal (Cow /Goat), Grocery items, sewing machine etc. A few evidences are given below.



The novelty here is, the poor people can earn money on a daily basis to maintain their families without paying any interest or the original amount given to them. It may be mentioned here that this approach is aligned with the Islamic Philosophy.

Primary Health Care

A Primary Health Care Center namely *Yunus Khan Primary Health Care Center* has been set up in the project area to create awareness among the target group about health care issues of women and children. A health worker (paramedics) has been recruited to provide health services regularly. Besides, an MBBS (female) physician has been appointed to provide service weekly to them too. The beneficiaries are provided medicines for free. The following table presents glimpses the services.



Description	Quantity
Consultation service by MBBS doctor	27 days
No. of Health Card Distribution	1000
Total treatment provided with medicines	1226 Patients (Female -921, Male -249 and Child- 56)
Service to pregnant mothers	25
Service to lactating mothers	50
Referral Patients	1

Conclusion

This report comprehended with a few praiseworthy initiatives of Daffodil International University to serve the local disadvantaged communities and lead a peaceful life with their family members. They were supplied substantial quantity of bulk food items, self-employment stuff, and free medical services. These are a few basic needs of human being for their survival.