

# Annual Report 2017



**National Alliance of  
Humanitarian Actors,  
Bangladesh (NAHAB)**

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## Introduction

The types, dynamics, and dimensions of the drivers of humanitarian crises are changing dramatically. The disasters impacts and human suffering has reached staggering levels. Of all the global trends, the impacts of climate change may cause the greatest humanitarian stress in the coming years. The maintenance of the core humanitarian tenets of impartiality and neutrality is a constant challenge. On the other hand, humanitarian funding is disproportionately distributed, not only geographically but spatially as well. In that context the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) took place on 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul. The launch of the "Grand Bargain" at the Summit and is ready to help tackle the funding gap in humanitarian action. The largest 15 donors and 15 largest agencies receiving of their funds - agreed to increasing the use of cash and market mechanisms, directing more funding to national and local organizations. There were also very positive outcomes with promising endeavors in the areas of localization, innovation and education for promoting the idea of local ownership and leadership in humanitarian action, and this is an essential precursor to a structural reform of the humanitarian system. Another initiative of International NGO's, which is "The Charter for Change" (C4C) launched in July 2015 by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Dan Church Aid and ADESO and has now been signed by 29 INGOs (including Oxfam, CARE, and Islamic Relief) and endorsed by more than 125 national organizations and networks from across the globe.

In Bangladesh, currently the humanitarian architecture is dominated by International actors and there is very little presence and voices of the local actors like CBO's, Local and national NGO's, even with the huge presence of them in the local and national level. The local actors can demonstrate the community based approach for faster responses, better quality and more effective. Considering the present context, on 26 January 2017 around 45 Local and National NGOS in Bangladesh and decided to established a platform called "National Alliance of Humanitarian Actors, Bangladesh (NAHAB)" with the support of shifting the Power (STP) project leaded by Christian Aid. The Department of Disaster Management of Bangladesh Government officially acknowledges NAHAB as a national platform of the Humanitarian Actors. An ad-hoc committee has been formed with 11 L/NNGOs on even geographical distribution across Bangladesh. NAHAB is committed to promote localization and to encourage and support national/local humanitarian actors with seven thematic focuses for faster, needful and effective humanitarian actions in Bangladesh: Information & Knowledge Management, Fostering better Coordination, Networking among humanitarian actors, strengthening capacity for humanitarian action, Resource Mobilization, Advocacy at all level and working closely with Government.

## Activity Highlights of the Year

### 1. Formation of a local humanitarian platform called “NAHAB”

The Local and National NGOs in Bangladesh considering their own skills and capacity found it is not enough to meet the expectation of changing environment in the humanitarian program. With the objective of creating a balanced humanitarian system, on 26 January 2017 around 45 Local and National NGOS in Bangladesh and decided to established a platform called “National Alliance of Humanitarian Actors, Bangladesh (NAHAB) for working together in Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh (Department of Disaster Management) officially acknowledges NAHAB as a national platform of the Humanitarian Actors. The NGOs come together to establish NAHAB as an alliance is to encourage and support national/local non-governmental, national humanitarian organizations, partners and other relevant actors to uphold their voice, representation and commitment to invest for faster, needful and effective humanitarian actions in Bangladesh. An ad-hoc committee was formed with 11 member’s organization from eight administrative divisions.



MD. Yousuf Ali, Joint Secretary, Director MIM, DDM delivering his valuable speech at National Actors' Platform formation



Dr. A. Atiq Rahman Executive Director, BCAS delivering his valuable speech at NAHAB launching event

### 2. Endorsement of NAHAB

After the launching of NAHAB, the most crucial stage was to get recognition from the public sector. STP team facilitated the process of endorsement of NAHAB and its ad-hoc committee from the Department of Disaster Management (DDM), Bangladesh. Director General of DDM sat with the ad-hoc committee members of NAHAB to provide future strategic direction. Some of the key humanitarian issues were identified that NAHAB should focus now and emphasize on setting up the institutional structure from national level to local level. Consequently, NAHAB ad-hoc committee will compose the constitution illustrating the membership process and governance mechanism with ensuring accountability and democracy. Accordingly, Christian Aid office will play the secretariat role of NAHAB temporarily.



### 3. Local actors taking place alongside international actors in humanitarian sector of Bangladesh (Coordinated Needs Assessment)

The heavy rainfall and rapid onrush of water in the upstream of Bangladesh caused a miserable flash flood in North-East part of Bangladesh (Haor region) in late March, 2017. Though the disaster took place in the late March, the humanitarian actors were reluctant to get involved in the process unless there has been a call for Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) by Humanitarian Coordination Task Team, the apex body of humanitarian sector in Bangladesh.



However, after one month of this devastating flash flood, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief started Coordinated Needs Assessment (CNA) process instead of JNA involving multiple stakeholders in humanitarian sectors. Generally, the INGOs used to take the lead in accomplishing any Joint Needs Assessment process in Bangladesh. However, this is the first time that

National Alliance of Humanitarian Actors, Bangladesh (NAHAB), a platform entirely driven by local humanitarian actors took the lead of one district (Netrokona) and completed the process successfully. This clearly demonstrated the strength of local and national humanitarian actors in accomplishing any needs assessment process with precision and authenticity. The assessment process was successfully completed by the fifteen trained facilitators of NAHAB member organization. It also manifest the increasing recognition of local and national humanitarian actors among international and government agencies towards uphold their voice and placing themselves alongside in humanitarian architecture of Bangladesh.



NAHAB has been formed to facilitate local and nationals not only to have a stronger voice and representation in humanitarian platforms, networks and national disaster management structure but also create access to financial and non-financial resources. Moreover, it also aspires to help the L/NNGOs to create a platform for identity to be recognized by international humanitarian actors which has been started its journey through the involvement in JNA/CNA process. However, in the long run NAHAB vision is to act as a centre of excellence helping to facilitate learning to other local organizations and enhancing opportunities for a more effective and timely humanitarian response.



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#### 4. Walking towards Local: Current success and future aspirations of NAHAB (Resource mobilization)

After the trigger of Coordinated Needs Assessment (CNA), NAHAB actively lead the process in Netrokona district. However, conducting needs assessment is not the end of the journey. So, several organizations under the banner of NAHAB agreed to mobilize resources jointly to support the flood affected distress communities in haor areas. Accordingly, five organizations namely



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PC: Roushon/DAM

POPI (lead organization), Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), Caritas Bangladesh and Efforts for Rural Advancement (ERA) applied for the Humanitarian Response Grant Facility (HRGF) of Oxfam as **“NAHAB Haor Consortium”**. All these five organizations have massive footprint in the flash flood affected haor areas and the consortium proposed a minimum operation cost of

7.4 % which clearly demonstrated the cost effectiveness and commitment of local/national organization for humanitarian action. Considering the strength, cost efficiency, knowledge and skills of five organizations, NAHAB Haor Consortium was awarded the HRGF, an amount of BDT 16,200,000 to support 3500 marginalized household with particular focus on women headed households; people with disabilities; the elderly, children and other socially excluded persons. The multipurpose cash grant support BDT 4,000 was given to each household. This resource mobilization initiative is the first step of NAHAB to mobilize and uphold the capacities of local and national organization so that they can take place alongside international actors in current humanitarian architecture of Bangladesh. It was highly appreciated by the donors for implementing the project with high quality fashion, especially for marinating the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS). However, this is just the beginning of NAHAB. It seeks to support to help the L/NNGOs to create a platform for identity to be recognized the contribution of local and national actors by international humanitarian actors. In the long run NAHAB also aims to act as a centre of excellence for enhancing functional collaboration to leverage the learning and opportunities among humanitarian actors for a more effective and timely humanitarian response.

## 5. Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) Power café on Localization organized by NAHAB

The 5<sup>th</sup> Power café title ***“Let’s work together at NAHAB”*** held on 30 May, 2017, which was the first initiative of NAHAB with an objective to inform the national level humanitarian stakeholders and solicit their expert suggestions on this localization process. Around 35 personnel from L/NNGOs, INGOs, UN organization contributed in the discussion.



Discussion at 5<sup>th</sup> Power Café organized by NAHAB

A remarkable point to mention of this Power Café is to bring changes in the seating arrangement; where there was no different set up as stage and audience, in an equal setting, each and every one was treated as special participant to contribute to this journey. In addition to this, symbolically, it has shown the interest of NAHAB to bring changes in power structure and practice.

The participants pointed out the recent experience of Haor Flash Flood, where NAHAB played a very vital role in assessing the situation and needs and disseminated the needs assessment report much earlier than the HCTT triggered Coordinated Needs Assessment has been done. Advocacy at local level, local humanitarian capacity building, representation at decision-making bodies, strengthening the JNA resources pool etc. have been mentioned by the participants as future scopes of the platform.



Moreover, this power café seeks to explore the opportunities for collaboration and networking among existing humanitarian forum, networks and major actors, including NIRAPAD, NARRI, SANGJOG, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, etc. Though, each of these actor has own mandate, set-up, members/partners, it requires a certain point of collaboration among them towards a common vision. Therefore, to ensure efficient and effective humanitarian services at the affected community levels a broad-based collaborative framework among the actors and alignment of services at the local levels is essential. It also aims to develop a process for sharing of information, joint needs assessment, coordinated planning for complementary services and participatory monitoring of accomplishments.

NAHAB is a groundbreaking step initiated in Bangladesh for fostering collaboration of local and national humanitarian actors. This power café paved the way for NAHAB to accelerate this process through upholding the voice and pressing issues of local and national humanitarian actors in the humanitarian architecture of Bangladesh.

## 6. Involvement of NAHAB in National Convention on Disaster Management

NAHAB actively engaged in two days long National Convention on Disaster Management organized by Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) by showcasing its members activity, case study, poster, leaflet and documentary in the programme stall exhibition. Besides, on behalf of NAHAB, Dr. M. Ehsanur Rahman, NAHAB Chair and Executive Director to Dhaka Ahsania Mission participated as a panelist in the session on ***“Strengthen Disaster Management Committees at local level”***. NAHAB as whole emphasize that disaster management is not only the responsibility of MoDMR, rather it requires a great level of collective and coordinated action of all humanitarian actors i.e. Local Disaster Management Committees, volunteers, INGOS, L/NNGOs at local level. Hence, it requires an enabling environment that facilitates the local communities and grassroots NGOs to utilize their capacity and opportunities towards taking their decision for effective and timely humanitarian actions.



Dr. M. Ehsanur Rahman, NAHAB Chair in the session on ***“Strengthen Disaster Management Committees at local level”***.  
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## 7. NAHAB institutionalization through strategy planning and action plan

NAHAB has been formed with an aim to promote localization aspect in humanitarian actions of Bangladesh. It also aspires to raise the voice of national and local actors in humanitarian decision-making process thus ensuring efficient and effective response, better coordination and localization in terms of resource mobilization and capacity building of L/NNGOs with the support of Shifting the Power (STP) project.



To set the future strategic of NAHAB, a strategy workshop was held in 23-24 July 2017 at Chutti Resort Centre. The major two outcomes of the workshop i) A draft strategy paper of NAHAB outlining the roadmap and thematic focus of NAHAB and ii) A details plan of actions of NAHAB for next 3 years in a log frame illustrating the activities, means of verification and agreed timeline.

NAHAB Ad hoc Committee Members, other likeminded project personnel i.e. ELNHA, DEPP Project Personnel, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, relevant INGOs, Shongjog Platform, Haor Advocacy Forum, Disaster Forum and relevant subject experts contributed towards development of NAHAB strategic direction



Discussion in the NAHAB strategy workshop  
Photo Credit: Manik/Christian Aid



Discussion in the NAHAB strategy workshop  
Photo Credit: Manik/Christian Aid

## 8. Power Café on private sector engagement in humanitarian actions

The impacts of natural disasters are devastating to business operation and sustainability. A tropical disaster has a great impact on agriculture and rural infrastructures such as shelter, sanitation, drinking water, electricity supplies and transportation services. The post-disaster statistics gave a clear message that it causes huge damages not only to livelihoods but also to business structures like rural roads, dams, embankments and, of course, loss of life. One of the key aspects of the disaster management cycle is disaster risk reduction to mitigate the loss in the country. The People usually think of disaster preparedness and response as the responsibility of government but the recent disaster in Haor (wetland), Bangladesh once again reminded us that disaster impact is not only affecting poor people's livelihoods but is also a threat to business growth.



During the discussion session of Power Café

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Thus the inescapable fact is that the private sector has a critical role to play in building more resilient business specifically, private companies should contribute by developing technologies and business models. The private sector should invest in building early warning and resilient infrastructure that is the key need for rural areas and cities.

Considering these facts, National Alliance of Humanitarian Actors, Bangladesh (NAHAB) and shifting the Power project of Christian Aid organized their **6<sup>th</sup> Power Café** highlighting the emerging needs and scope of private sector engagement in the humanitarian sector in Bangladesh. Some specific recommendations have been outlined in this Power Café and it is committed to get involved with the humanitarian support by different private sectors.

## 9. NAHAB takes ‘localization’ agenda at divisional level

As a humanitarian platform of local actors, NAHAB discusses the issue of ‘localization’ at administrative divisional level of Bangladesh through eight divisional workshops. The primary objective of this workshop was twofold. First, to share the issue and context of localization with local humanitarian actors from district and sub-district level and the role they can play for effective and faster humanitarian actions. Second, mapping of the humanitarian civil society actors; that can be a base document for establishing future coordination mechanism of NAHAB with a big picture of national humanitarian actors.



District Risk Reduction Officer of Chittagong speaking at NAHAB Chittagong Divisional Workshop.

PC: Manik/Christian Aid



NAHAB divisional workshop at Khulna

PC: Manik/Christian Aid

## 10. NAHAB collaborates with other DEPP projects

Since the beginning the intention of Christian Aid was to collaborate among the components of the DEPP projects of Bangladesh and the secretariat team has given their all effort to bring all relevant stakeholders on board. Consequently, during this tenure, shifting the power project facilitates a joint capacity strengthening event. NAHAB in collaboration with Shongjog, organized the capacity building workshop on Communication with Communities for midlevel staff from NAHAB member organizations involved in the humanitarian actions.

This workshop aims to strengthen the conceptual understanding, knowledge and skills of humanitarian responders so that they can communicate more effectively with affected populations using different tools while ensuring communication in two ways, coordinated and well- resourced. At the same time it actively contributes into their programs and project activities to collect feedback and respond accordingly. On the other hand, Chair of NAHAB participated in the DEPP learning conference to share the experiential learning and future perspective & potentials of NAHAB with other DEPP partner organizations.



Certificate is being awarded to NAHAB members for participating in CwC training

PC: Manik/Christian Aid



NAHAB and Shongjog Jointly organized CwC workshop for humanitarian responders

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## 11. Power café on “Media in Humanitarian Actions”

In the context of Bangladesh these roles of the media are getting increasing importance to extract ground information. But there are still way for further collaboration where the media can act as a bridge between the community and disaster management actors through circulating information about the experience of the community to the stakeholders; and expert knowledge of stakeholders to the community. In this circumstance, NAHAB and Shifting the Power organized 7<sup>th</sup> Power Café on 21 November 2017 about "Media in Humanitarian Actions. This Power Café explores the opportunities for humanitarian actors' collaboration with media and finding a common ground for networking on humanitarian actions in Bangladesh. A range of relevant civil society actors and media concern personnel joined the discussion.



Power Café on “Media in Humanitarian Actions”

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Power Café on “Media in Humanitarian Actions”

PC: Manik/Christian Aid



One of the major outcomes was to carry the continuous dialogue between media and humanitarian actors towards building mutual respect and being on the same page about the contemporary humanitarian issues.



Mr. Murshed Alam Sarker, Executive Director of POPI is delivering speech.



Mr. M. Abdus Salam, Chief Executive of GUK is giving his valuable opinion in the session.

## 12. Participation of NAHAB members in the International Conference in Nepal

Give 2 Asia and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) have organized an international on **Local Leadership in Disaster Resilience** to tape the local level best practices and experiences and further expand of network of CBO's/NGO's for sharing information with peer organization , build consortia of donors community focused on disaster preparedness. The conference was held in Nepal on 12-16<sup>th</sup> November'2017. NAHAB has created the opportunity of 15 participants from NAHAB member's organization to join in this conference. The Nepal conference of 12-16<sup>th</sup> November'17 has created the opportunity to share the experiential learning's among 15 CBO's/ NGO's of Nepal and 20 CBO's/ NGO's of Bangladesh through network establishment for a stronger disaster risk reduction (DRR) approach to build resilient communities.



It was an ample opportunity to explore the experiential learning's. Greater emphasis to be placed on the heightened earthquake vulnerability and specific needs of the people in community-based DRR, CCA and emergencies and it is essential that these needs are addressed. The learning's could be useful for Bangladesh and NAHAB can be part of global imitative as humanitarian platform.



### **13. Round table discussion on “Home Safe Home”: Reducing Exposure, Reducing Displacement**

On the occasion of International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDR) 2017, NAHAB enhanced to organize a round table discussion on “Home Safe Home” focusing the theme “Reducing Exposure, Reducing Displacement” on 11<sup>th</sup> October’2017 at the Daily Star, Dhaka. The event has been supported by Shifting the Power project of Christian Aid. Honorable Director General of Department of Disaster Management (DDM), Mr. Md. Reaz Ahmed has inaugurated the discussion as Chief Guest and Mr. Shakeb Nabi, Country Director of Christian Aid has played the role of moderate.



### **14. Bangladesh National Conference on Disaster Risk Management-2017**

Department of Disaster Management (DDM) in collaboration with key humanitarian NGOs in Bangladesh have organized Bangladesh National Conference on Disaster Risk Management-2017 on 3-4 October’2017 at Bangabondhu International Conference Centre (BICC). The Chair of NAHAB, Dr. M. Ehsanur Rahman was present as one of the panel discussant in the event.



### **15. NAHAB Secretariat is being run by Local NGOs**

NAHAB has been formed and working to promote localization in the humanitarian actions of Bangladesh and over the last one year it has been shaping its modality towards its future action. As a gradual institutionalization process and as per NAHAB -5-year strategy and action plan, NAHAB Secretariat is supposed to be hosted by one of its member organization on rotation basis. Consequently, with regards to the request of NAHAB ad-hoc committee, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) management has agreed to host the NAHAB secretariat from 1st December 2017. The Secretariat activities are now operating from DAM (Address: Dhaka Ahsania Mission House 19 Road No 12 Dhanmondi, Dhaka 1209). This is one of the way Shifting the Power is empowering local organization to own and run their humanitarian platform (NAHAB) in long run towards sustainability.