Report on 4th Lesson Learning Workshop

"Creating livelihoods for the urban extreme poor"



May 3-5, 2011 LGED-RDEC Bhaban Auditorium (Level 12), Agargaon, Dhaka



Jointly organised by: Dushtha Shasthya Kendra and shiree/ EEP

Introduction

Programme lesson learning workshops are a forum for shiree-supported NGOs to observe each others' activities, reflect on their own implementation experiences, and share lessons learnt in order to improve the impact and sustainability of their projects. These workshops are organised on a quarterly basis. All the workshops include a field visit to the host NGO's working area to promote observation and understanding of the project, leading to useful feedback and recommendation.

This was the fourth lesson learning workshop among Scale-Fund NGOs. It was hosted by Dustha Sasthya Kendra (DSK) in Dhaka.

shiree Lesson Learning Workshops

- 1. Jan 2010 Rangpur Care & PAB
- 2. May 2010 Rajshahi Netz
- 3. Nov 2010 Khulna SCUK & Uttaran
- 4. May 2011 Dhaka DSK

As this was the first lesson learning workshop facilitated by an urban project, it was preceded by a half day advocacy event to promote a collaborative approach to address urban extreme poverty and build inclusive cities. The event brought together other non-shiree NGOs and stakeholders working in urban areas to discuss key challenges and ways forward. The Chief Guest was Barrister Shafique Ahmed,



Honourable Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Bangladesh.

Objectives of the workshop:

- To share the experiences of the DSK-shiree project as well as other development initiatives under the shiree innovation fund;
- To advocate for urban extreme poor households to have due attention for improved livelihoods at the local and national level;
- To identify the challenges, opportunities and recommended actions to further strengthen urban extreme poverty programmes in the country.

Day-1 May 3rd, 2011, Advocacy workshop

Major Discussions

The key urban challenges identified are presented in the 'Exploring Urban Challenges' booklet published for this event (available on the shiree website). Another report "Eradication of Extreme Poverty among the Slum Dwellers in Dhaka City" from DSK-shiree project is available on the DSK website.

On the first day of the workshop, Chief Guest Barrister Shafique Ahmed (Honorable Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Bangladesh) highlighted the unique position of people affected by river bank erosion. Every year, a significant number of people lose their agricultural land and homesteads because of river erosion and natural disasters. Following this, they are often in helpless positions and as a result migrate to cities across the country to take shelter in slums. The new living arrangements present them with new challenges, notably, problems of safe water, healthcare services and education for their children.

Later, the Law Minister expressed the government's determination to provide full support to the urban poor in order to raise their living standards by empowering them economically. He stated, "Government and non-government organisations (NGOs) should work together to help attain better living standards to the urban population by empowering them economically," while adding that efforts should be made to fulfill their (the urban poor) basic needs by providing training in different skills to help them to be self-reliant.

"In order to break the vicious cycle of inter-generational poverty, we must work to eliminate all forms of social exclusion and focus on women's empowerment," said M Asadul Islam, Joint Secretary and Project Director, EEP/shiree.

Colin Risner (CEO, shiree) welcomed everybody on behalf of shiree and highlighted the lesson learning event as a key opportunity to address some critical issues in a dynamic way.

During the welcome speech of Dr Dibalok Singha (Executive Director, DSK), thanks was given to everybody for joining the workshop. Dr Singha pointed out that there are eight million urban poor in the country, half of whom are dwelling in the capital. He stated that major cities are the main drivers of economic growth for the nation. Rural-urban migration cannot be curbed by stimulating the rural economy alone, which requires a dynamic infrastructure and macro-level pro-poor growth along with better planning in the urban areas." In this scenario, the use of different subsidy instruments (ranging from rights-based approaches to asset transfers), can trigger a process that provides the extreme poor a protective space in which they can gradually move out of poverty. This initial "breathing space" created by subsidy instruments can be justified and replicated to include millions of extreme urban poor across Bangladesh.

Dr. Tofail Md. Alamgir Azad (Project Director of the DSK-shiree project) delivered a presentation which gave participants an overall view of the DSK-shiree project. In this, he gave a brief description about the goals and objectives of the project as well as challenges faced and achievements made so far in terms of food security, income and savings. Similar evidence is also found in the quarterly impact surveys conducted

by shiree in coordination with Cambridge and Bath University in the UK. (Note: Speechs are in the Annex 1a.)

Major lessons learnt from the workshop

- 1. Participants appreciated that DSK is working in a multi-dimensional way to address extreme poverty this is proving effective and productive.
- 2. Communities were observed as being more aware of their rights and to have more knowledge about know how to protect themselves against threats from outside. The Community Based Organisations (CBOs) have a strong role in conflict management, asset use and asset safety.
- 3. Disabled, elderly, lactating and pregnant mothers were identified as needing more allowance and attention.
- **4.** The multiple IGAs which DSK is operating, and its monitoring of these, appears effective.
- 5. Health and safety considerations are needed when operating individual and group businesses.
- **6.** "The Government and NGOs should work together to help attain better living standards to the urban population by empowering them economically" (Chief Guest Barrister Shafique Ahmed).
- 7. Participants emphasised the importance of tenure security and rights in slums, and the need for social protection schemes for the urban extreme poor.
- **8.** Participants emphasised women's important but often unrecognised role in the family, community and even in the larger economy. Thanks were given to shiree for giving priority to women in project implementation.

(Note: For major urban challenges and recommendation see Annex 1b and for the first day open discussion details see Annex 1c)

Participant Organisations

CARE Bangladesh, Save the Children UK, NETZ Bangladesh, Practical Action Bangladesh, Uttaran, PLAN International Concern Worldwide, Gono Unnayan Kendra, ADD, UPPR, BRAC, TDH italy, CUP, Nari Maitri, shiree, DSK.

Day 2 - May 4th, 2011: Field visit to DSK-shiree project working sites

Invited guests visited the DSK-shiree project sites to gather ideas and lessons about the activities of the project. The guests were divided into six separate teams and visited Kamrangirchar and Karail Slum. (See Annex 2 Detail reflections on DSK field visits from six groups)





Day 3 - May 5th, 2011 (morning session)

Reflections on field visits to DSK sites

Besides the reflections from the participants, Mr. Mihir Kanti Majumder, Ph.D, Honourable Secretary, RDC, LGRD was the special guest in third day morning session. Colin Risner, CEO, shiree, John Woolmer, Head, Harewell International, and Asadul Islam, Joint Secretary and Project Director, EEP/shiree, Dr. Dibalok Singha, ED, DSK were also present during the session

Activities observed during the field visits

- Important role of CBOs;
- Women's participation in CBOs;
- Training on tailoring and involvement of family members;
- Satellite clinics;
- Individual and group IGAs;
- Community latrines;
- Coaching centre for poor slum children;
- Adolescent health sessions;
- CBO corporative business.

Major learning

- The project's holistic approach appears effective;
- The selection procedure was fair and accurate;
- Each family is benefiting from multiple income generating sources through involvement with DSK;
- The presence of many women in every area seems to be helping because they are committed;

- Strong role of CBOs. The responsibilities of the CBOs are clear and specific;
- IGA interventions take into account innate skills:
- Special fund allocation for pregnant and lactating mothers, elderly and destitute persons;
- Through group saving and diversified businesses, income levels have significantly changed, and all these changes have taken place within a very short time of period;
- BHHs' basic services and specifically health services have been assured;
- Adolescent health sessions are helping teenagers deal with their age specific vulnerabilities.

Major recommendations on the basis of current activities

- In order to protect BHHs from unwanted risks such as eviction, government linkages need to be made.
- Separate male and female toilets are required in training spaces. Training

spaces could also be made more environmentally friendly.

- Improved hygiene practices are required for people who are running food businesses as well as hazardous work. Moreover, there should be some protection measures to avoid hazardous risks.
- Since CBOs are playing a significant role and contributing in a large way, a written document is required to prevent disputes.
- Private sector linkages could be researched to encourage sustainable outcomes.
- Protection, technical knowledge and safety are required for hazardous jobs.
 To promote this, training needs to be provided.
- CBOs need to understand people's different roles and responsibilities.
- Collaboration with other NGOs is needed.

(Note: Details observations and recommendations are presented in Annex 2a.)



Day 3 - May 5th, 2011 (afternoon)

Lesson learning workshop for Innovation Fund 3 Urban NGOs (shiree partners)

During the afternoon of the third day, 3 urban partners from the shiree Innovation Fund Round 3 (Concern Worldwide, Plan International and ADD) were given special attention in order to facilitate a cross learning from DSK to improve the implementation of these projects.

Each NGO presented the specific urban challenge most affecting them, which were then discussed by the larger platform.

- Concern Worldwide: citizenship rights of the urban poor.
- Plan International: street children.
- ADD: people with disabilities.

(For details of the presentation see Annex 3a) (See Annex 3b Summary of day three)

Annexes

Annex 1a - Speeches from the advocacy workshop

Welcome Speech: Dr. Dibalok Singh, Executive Director, DSK

- The activities of DSK are inspirational to others working with the urban poor.
- More skills-based training is required for the extreme poor.
- Few market linkages exist for the extreme poor. Specific kinds of interventions are needed to involve the extreme poor in the private sector.

Presentation on DSK Project: Tofail Md. Alamgir Azad, Ph.D, PD, DSK-Shiree Project

Major lessons learnt from current activities:

- The intervention model is working;
- Efficiency of targeting instruments;
- The project is witnessing an increased understanding on participation; awareness, voice and rights;
- Visible female participation and inspiration;
- Positive mobility and an effective role of co-operatives is being observed.

Current major challenges:

- Links with market based instruments;
- Maintenance of upward mobility of HHs and cooperatives as a vehicle;
- Static or downward mobility. Business failure with the physically challenged and elderly;
- Standardisation of subsidy tools;
- Combining apprenticeships, skills development and scholarships;
- Engagement with the private sector;
- Migration, evictions, disasters (fires) and the physical environment in the slums;
- The power structure in the slum and associated intimidation.

Policies for the Poor: Colin Risner, CEO, shiree

- The target of shiree is to uplift the bottom 10%: the extreme poor;
- Along with shiree, other organisations are working to achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1;
- These workshops are designed to be a forum for participation.

Md. Asadul Islam, PD, shiree

Md.Asadul Islam (Project Director of shiree) thanked the honourable Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Bangladesh for participating. He talked about some of the poverty alleviation projects of the GoB and suggested the creation of a bridge between shiree and GOB to achieve MDG 1. He further highlighted the hard work of GoB to reduce extreme poverty and to the potential for further cross-sectoral collaboration.

Keynote Speech: Chief Guest, Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Bangladesh

- Rural to urban migration is a major driver of urban poverty.
- Major problems of urban poverty include sudden eviction, deprivation of basic services, and man-made problems.
- Economic empowerment of the extreme urban poor people is needed.
- Urban poor people are citizens of Bangladesh and therefore have every right to have their basic fundamental needs fulfilled.
- Collaboration between the Government, NGOs and the private sector is needed.

Annex 1b - Recommendations made to tackle key urban challenges

Lead organisation	Subject	Challenges	Recommendations
Concern Citizenship Worldwide rights of the urban poor		"Patha basi manus " street dwellers are not recognised under any kind of laws.	Street dwellers must be included in the national legal system, specifically in the City Corporation Ordinance.
		Street dwellers are deprived of basic services due to lack of birth registration, national identity card.	Birth registration of the street dwellers.
		Street dwellers do not have any	Specific budget allocation for urban extreme poor.
		permanent living place or GoB support.	Permanent rehabilitation or distribution of khas lands.
			Street dwellers should get the national identity cards.
UPPR Land tenure security		Social unrest.	Legalise the land tenure.
		Constant threat of eviction.	Strong measures are essential to stop the sudden eviction.
			Develop revenue for the GOB.
			Dedicate areas for resettlement and include in city planning.
ADD	Dealing with disabilities	Lack of confidence among people with disabilities.	Advocacy at grassroots level. NGOs should include disabled people in their beneficiary lists.
		Negative attitude of the community.	Needs based training and networking with private sector to create job opportunities for the disabled.
		Corporate sector is not very conducive.	Awareness building for employment opportunity. Media mobilisation can play a significant role.
		Limited employment opportunities.	Policies supporting a disability inclusive private sector - such as tax incentives to employ people with disabilities, disability friendly working spaces.
			Larger budget allocation for disabled people.

Legalise the status of slums. Integration of social services in existing programmes. Partnership between private and public for urban planning. Training to remove hazardous jobs in slums and promote other IGAs. Strengthen maternal health, family planning, health and food programmes through awareness raising. Strong child protection laws and policy and enforcement.
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Awareness at the community, family and state level.
Create economic opportunities for families so children can stay in school.
Increase the budgetary allocation towards street children.
Access to basic services at the grassroots level.
Awareness building for win-win relationships.
Capacity development of stakeholders and analysis of private sector needs.

Annex 1c- Open discussion during the first day

After six group's presentations, an open ended discussion session was held, facilitated by Colin Risner, CEO, shiree. The discussion was based on the six group's findings and recommendations. Many of the participants shared their opinions.

Focusing on the 'protection of street children' issue, one participant shared that SOS is working specifically with abandoned children. An SOS model could help us identify an effective and long term solution for working with street children. He also said that, "dealing only with urban street children is not a sustainable solution. We have to also work at the grass roots level."

Delara (shiree) also expressed concern about the protection of street children. Based on her previous work experience, she raised the question that, "how is it possible and who will be responsible to provide legal aid support for street children?" She also raised the question of how child law can be more effective. She pointed to the need for 'interaction among different stakeholders' and private sector engagement, as well as raising voice at the beneficiary level.

Mr. Mussaraf Hossain, Country Director of ADD shared that, for 2007-2008 year's budget allocation, there was just 1.5% allocation for disabled people who are the bottom 10% of total population of Bangladesh. He stated "I think, this is the another kind of exploitation from the policy makers". In response to the discussions on disability, he said, "There is a stigma both in the private sector and NGO sector that, disabled are not able to change their life and time. But I can ensure you that, they are also productive people; only what they need are opportunities and a change in attitude towards them."

Dr. Tofail Md. Alamgir Azad, Project Director (DSK-shiree project) shared that, there is only 7.3% budget allocation under the govt. safety net programme and no allocation for the urban extreme poor who are making a great contribution at the national economic growth. This is a significant issue for the next budget planning. He also shared that, in the process of DSK-shiree project implementation, during the last year, target households have had to cope with three evictions and two fire explosions. Here, households lose gains made. Dr. Azad requested the audience to think about what to do for extreme poor people during evictions and fire explosions.

At the end of the discussion session, one participant emphasized that tenure security, slums legality/ rights and social protection schemes are needed for the urban extreme poor. Colin thanks everyone for joining an effective discussion. He also requested everybody look at the view through the conference room window to realise the coexistence of poor and rich in Dhaka city.

Annex 2- Detail reflections on DSK field visits from six groups

Group	Observations/ Best Practices	Recommendations
No. 1	Disable, old-age, lactating and pregnant mothers allowance (600 per month for 6 months) CBO linking with schools & CBO resolving social and	Increase advocacy around access to water and no eviction without rehabilitation Increase advocacy to formal child education (govt.)
	household's conflict (working outside project activities) Adolescent health sessions and linking with BRAC health and delivery centre Fund allocation to CBOs from DSK and women protecting assets through CBOs Ownership of social business – potential	Increase training time and allowance for disable, old-age, lactating and pregnant mothers for full project period More training and capacity building for CBOs Adult literacy for recording financial transaction and transparent profit distribution mechanism
	Improved health and hygiene status	Registration of social business and CBOs.
No. 2	Water point and sanitary latrine establish based on beneficiary status Asset transfer by two or three times to ensure the sustainability	For sustainability of the project intervention, strong coordination need to established and maintain with other GO & NGO activities within the slum.
	of transferred asset. Inventing mechanism considering disable people's capacity	As family member is an important matter for the extreme poor, so DSK have to more emphasize on family planning at their health services
	Helpful supplementary support like start-up capital, skill based training and various allowances	

Group	Observations/ Best Practices	Recommendations
No. 3	Holistic approach of DSK Shiree project dealing with health, hygiene, IGA, training, motivation sessions etc. Multiple income sources (individual IGA, CBO business, training, allowance) Training with market linkage. Regular income monitoring of BHHs	Consider emphasizing healthy practice and precautionary measure during IGA activities (through training and advice during IGA selection) • Eg. Smoke causing health problems in pita • Eg. No masks for dust during mats production Written guidelines for business centre management Hygiene practice training especially for food business (in food preparation and handling)
No. 4	Enhanced confidence through fulfilment of daily need by regular earning Strong role of CBO for ensuring livelihoods opportunities PWDs and old age beneficiaries as well as conflict management in asset use and asset safety Presence of large number of female members in CBOs Joint business ideas have worked will for BHH and enthusiasm among BHHs for interventions	Linkage with government health services Ensure occupational safety Measures need to be taken for dealing with mastan's and police harassment More joint venture might be a tool for sustainability
No. 5	Special fund allocation (Start up cash, stipend for elderly, disable, pregnant and lactating mother, community lead intervention) Increased women awareness Significant income change through multiple IGA intervention	Need more group maturity (clear understanding on role and responsibilities of group member) IGA diversification through business plan(not depend on single IGA) Strong business management

Group	Observations/ Best Practices	Recommendations
	(Based on skill and preference) Group and CBO Approach (Women focused) & Group Savings (Pass book, deposit in the bank)	CBO registration and policies. Chain investment and marketing need to be developed
No. 6	Selection process and criteria for trainees as well as beneficiaries was transparent	Duration of training time should be longer. There should be provisions of allowance.
	CBO was organized and well known about their roles, activities, and responsibilities	
		Need to follow up training for different interventions.
	People involved in IGA activities were very happy with their income opportunities/business	Inclusion of marginalized and people with disabilities should be included (into project planning and implementation)
	People were satisfied with the services (satellite clinic, community latrine, water point etc)	
	Health hazard is reduced due to increasing health awareness for effective intervention	

Annex 3a - New urban NGO challenges

Challenges of Concern World wide	Recommendation -Lesson from DSK	Action to Take for Concern/ Planning	Collaboration? - Other shiree partners (or NGOs), Private sector, Government
Hygiene maintenance	- Training - Quality control - Certification	- Motivation training, Business training, Food preparation training, Hygiene training	- DSK, ADD NGOs will provide foods from their shops for training and other activities (DSK)
Capacity building	Training Education Exposure visit		
Shifting/migration	- Group security - Security money	Accommodation facilityHealth support	- Training support facilities (DSK)
Legal/ government approved	- Advocacy - Linkage	Liaison with governmentCommunity meetingMeeting with bazaar committee	- Link with other rural NGOs project for rehabilitation (Uttaran)
Existing businessman	Negotiation Elite class investment	Meeting with bazaar committee Group formation	- Motivation support from ADD especially disabled BHHs
Profit/loss	- Better management training - Risk money	- Always market analysis	

Challenges of Plan International	Recommendation - Lesson from DSK	Action to Take for Plan/ Planning	Collaboration? - Other shiree partners (or NGOs), - Private sector, Government
Finding street children	- Coordination with other organisations		- Concern, DSK, Save the Children, ADD
Frequent mobility	- Motivation and counselling, recreation, security	 Training and orientation. Creating child friendly environment. 	- DCC - Law-enforcing agencies
Employers negative attitude	- Rapport building	- Networking	- Employers Association (MLE)
Lack of creating new jobs	- Linkage		
Disability			
Child abuse	- Abide by national and international labour law. Strong monitoring		- ILO, MLE, MOWEA

Challenges of the ADD	Recommendation - Lesson from DSK	Action to Take for ADD/ Planning	Collaboration? - Other shiree partners (or NGOs), Private sector, Government
Selection of target people Motivate them to change their mind set	 More options for job opportunities Counselling, Motivation to HHs with PWD Training 	PP visit, Identify new job opportunities Discussions with PWDs and donors	 Provide training and technical support (DSK) Sharing poorest experiences (DSK) Support to capacity building by PAB Market linkage with PAB Relationship building with employers by Plan
Suitable job environment	Needs assessment of PWDsIdentify capacities of PWDs and jobs for them	- Advocacy for policy development	Skill training by CWWSharing safeguard standard by PlanGarments training by DAM
Attitudes towards PWDs, Mindset of employers	- Motivational programme, Awareness, Advocacy, Network, Linkage	Dialogue Meeting with relevant stakeholders	
Implement project costly	- Extra grants/stipends, Assistive device	-	
Working environment	- Compliance for PWDs	- Provide education, Support based on their need, Health service	

Annex 3b- Summary of day three

The main objective of the third day was to reflect on the field visits carried out in DSK implementation areas. It started with a working session and preparation by the six groups. The learning and findings were then presented by each team.

Mr. Mihir Kanti Majumder, Ph.D, Hon'ble Secretary, RDC, LGRD was the special guest in the



EEP/shiree were also present. The session started with welcome speech from Dr. Dibalok Singha, ED, DSK. Dr. Dibalok in which he thanked everybody for their suggestions

morning session. Colin Risner, CEO, shiree, John Woolmer, Head, Harewell Int'I, and Asadul Islam, Joint Secretary and Project Director,



and recommendations for improving the intervention.

Two DSK- shiree project beneficiaries also shared their experiences about the changes they have experienced due to the DSK-shiree project. Firstly, Anoarkoli, a cashier of a CBO, described how the project has changed her life. She compared her life before and after the project and told that it has brought increased happiness to her family. She thanked DSK and shiree for their kind support and highlighted than residents at Korail need facilities for safe drinking water.

Secondly, Sonia, a Chair person of a CBO operating in Karail slum, thanked everybody for their kind support and assistance in changing her livelihood. Through both her and her husband venturing in multiple IGAs, they are now able to earn enough to eat three meals a day and send their children to school. She raised the issue of gas lines running through the slums and of the continuing risk of fire explosion. Also, larger budgets are needed to sustain and develop her CBO's collective business into a larger one.



Following this, John Woolmer from Harewelle International shared his learning from the previous day's field visit and thanked DSK for adopting and implementing such a holistic project. He commented that DSK is doing a tremendous job. He suggested making plans for developing specific indicators to record how people are moving out of poverty.

Asadul Islam, Joint Secretary and Project Director of EEP/shiree then summarised his

observations, including its holistic approach. Because more and more people are migrating from rural villages to urban slums, the GoB, donors and NGOs need to work together. He also asked DSK to design mechanisms for encouraging sustainability after the project has ended.

In his finishing speech, Dr. Dibalok Singha thanked participants for their kind patience and



participation throughout the sessions. He informed that DSK has been negotiating with WASA to set up a pump in Karail slum so that the residents can get safe water and daily usage. However, the progress is small as the permission file is with a government ministry and under threat of not being signed. DSK are continuing to put pressure on them. He thanked participants and representatives for their kind suggestions and recommendations. These will help DSK to fight urban poverty with a more profound strategy and implementation plan. He also expressed his gratitude to shiree and DFID for their kind support and assistance.

Workshop Agenda

Day 1 - Advocacy Workshop

- 08:30 Registration
- 09:00 Welcome address by Dr. Dibalok Singha, Executive Director, DSK
- 09:10 Presentation on DSK-Shiree Project by Mr. Tofail Md. Alamgir Azad, Ph.D, PD, DSK-Shiree Project
- 09:30 Policies for the Poor Mr. Colin Risner, CEO, shiree and Mr. Md. Asadul Islam, PD, shiree
- 10:00 Speech by the Chief Guest, Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Hon'ble Minister,
 Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Bangladesh
- 10:30 Tea break
- 11:00 Challenges and Opportunities break out sessions
 - Citizenship Rights of the Urban Poor Concern
 - Land Tenure Security UPPR
 - Dealing with Disability ADD
 - Access to Basic Services TDH Italy
 - Protection of Street Children Plan
 - Private Sector Engagement CARE
- 11:40 Group Presentations
- 12:40 Synthesis

Day 2 - Field visit to DSK-Shiree Project Sites

09:00 Please contact Mr. Baten (01720-106797) if you would like to participate in the field trip.

Day 3 - Lesson Learning Workshop (For shiree partners only)

- 09:00 Reflections on field visit to DSK sites
- 11:00 Speech by Special Guest Mr. Mihir Kanti Majumder, Ph.D., Hon'ble Secretary, RDCD, LGRD
- 14:00 Analysis of intervention opportunities for shiree innovation fund urban NGOs
- 15:00 Presentation by Solution Exchange Bangladesh
- 15:30 Opportunities for further collaboration and closing