

অক্সফাম বার্তা
OXFAM BARTA

NEWSLETTER FROM BANGLADESH |

JAN - MAR 2025
VOL. 2 | ISSUE 2

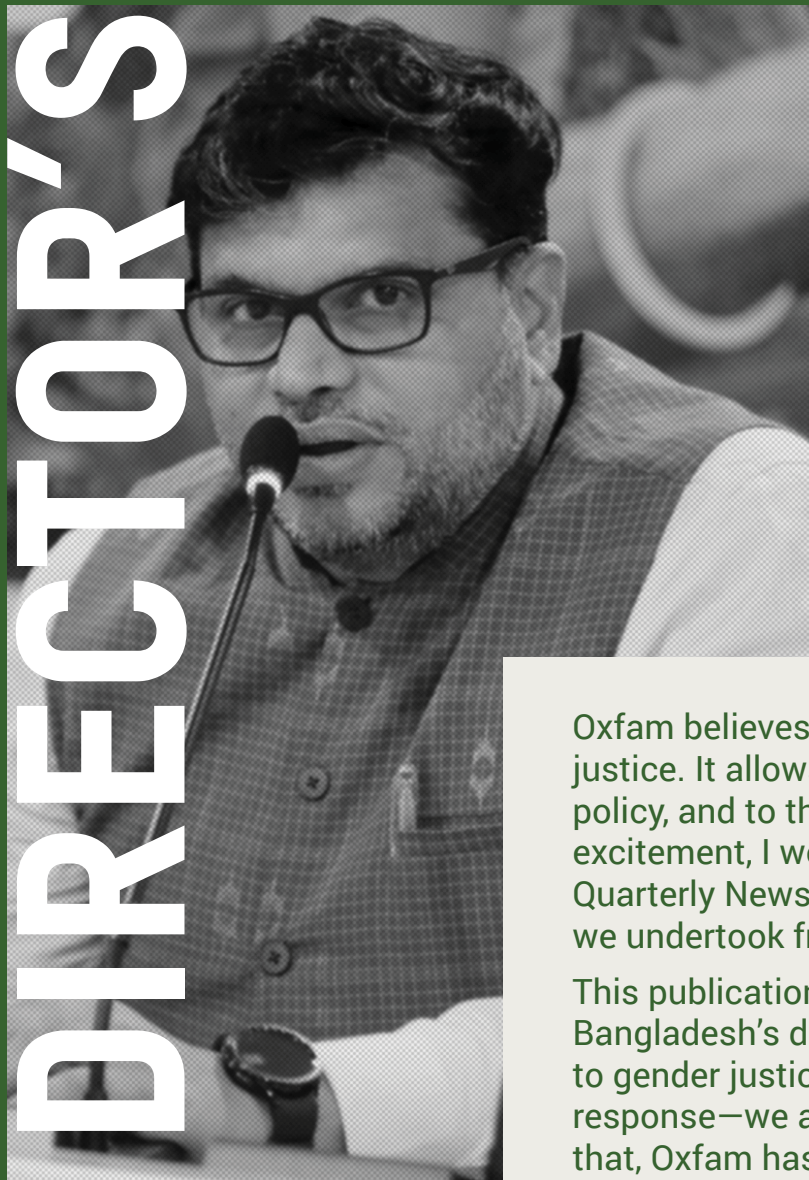


OXFAM



LEGACY AND REALTIES:

RISE, INNOVATE AND RUN



DIRECTOR'S

COUNTRY
INSIGHT

Oxfam believes that storytelling is a powerful act of justice. It allows us to connect people to purpose, to policy, and to the possibility of change. With great excitement, I welcome you to Oxfam in Bangladesh's Quarterly Newsletter, covering the remarkable journeys we undertook from January to March 2025.

This publication arrives at a crucial moment in Bangladesh's development journey. From media freedom to gender justice, from climate resilience to humanitarian response—we are navigating complex terrain. And in that, Oxfam has remained consistent: listening, learning, and leading with communities.

This issue reflects that spirit. You will read about youth-led climate innovations, women re-entering leadership roles, Rohingya and host communities reclaiming dignity, and the boldness of our advocacy—from running for domestic workers' rights to convening national dialogues on misinformation and green transition. These stories are a testament to our commitment: that every programme we implement also advances justice, voice, and equity.

I also want to acknowledge the growing need to tell our stories more proactively—to the government, to donors, and to each other. This newsletter is our collective stage—to inform, to inspire, and to influence.

As we continue this journey, I invite you to engage, contribute, and co-create. Let's make this platform a beacon of what Oxfam stands for—people-powered change.

ASHISH DAMLE
COUNTRY DIRECTOR, OXFAM IN BANGLADESH



NOTE

EDITOR'S

At Oxfam, we do not just implement programmes; we spark change, shape narratives, and drive justice. Yet, in the rush of delivery, we often fall short in showcasing our stories, voices, and influence. This newsletter is our renewed commitment to capturing what matters—the lives we touch, the ideas we elevate, and the partnerships we nurture.

This edition features highlights from January to March 2025—a quarter marked by the launch of the Development Media Forum, the resonance of Oxfam Run, the debut of Film for Change, and the reflective journey of Plumbers of the World in the Rohingya response. You'll also read how we've celebrated leadership, challenged disinformation, advocated for just energy transitions, and empowered communities—from Teknaf to Sylhet.

Through this initiative, we want to bridge the gap between our impactful work and the audiences who matter most—donors, government partners, civil society, media, and communities.

This newsletter is more than a collection of updates. It's a mirror of our mission, our collaboration, and our advocacy in motion. I thank all contributors, especially our ICAM team, programme colleagues, and partners. Together, let's continue to write challenges and changes.

MD SARIFUL ISLAM
HEAD OF INFLUENCING, ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS
AND MEDIA, OXFAM IN BANGLADESH

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SPOTLIGHT

OXFAM LAUNCHED DEVELOPMENT MEDIA FORUM TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE JOURNALISM FOR NATIONAL PROGRESS



Oxfam in Bangladesh has launched the Development Media Forum (DMF) with the aim of fostering inclusive journalism and advancing development by enhancing connections, expanding access to information, and strengthening international networks. The forum was officially inaugurated at a high-profile event held in Dhaka on 12 January 2025, bringing together over 180 journalists, academics, diplomats, and development professionals.

The launch event featured key speakers including Shafiqul Alam, Press Secretary to the Interim Government; Faruk Wasif, Director General of the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB); Nicolas Linus Ragnar Weeks, Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh; and Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh.



"Journalism must ask the tough questions—about environmental policies, human rights, and accountability. To rise to the occasion, we must invest in media training and capacity-building," said Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam.

PIB's Director General Faruk Wasif described, *"If done right, this forum can amplify local voices and bring their issues to the global stage, holding both national and international power structures accountable."*



Ambassador Weeks emphasized Sweden's continued support, stating, *"Through initiatives like DMF, we can tackle global challenges like climate change and create more opportunities for the media sector in Bangladesh."*

Oxfam's Country Director Ashish Damle reflected on the global challenges faced by journalism today—from commercial pressure to the growing 'news war.' "We must protect journalism as a public good. This forum is a critical part of that effort," he said.

A panel discussion titled "Bangladesh's Development Journey: The Role and Future of Media" followed, with insights from industry leaders such as Talat Mamun (Channel 24), Riaz Ahmed (Dhaka Tribune), Dr. Sumon Rahman (ULAB), Akbar Hossain (London Press Minister), Mubin S. Khan (The Business Standard), and Mohammad Akmal Sharif (ACF). The session was moderated by Md Sariful Islam, Head of Influencing, Communications, Advocacy and Media at Oxfam in Bangladesh.



READ MORE



WATCH THE FULL EVENT



WATCH A VIDEO ON DMF

SPOTLIGHT

OVER 2,000 JOINED OXFAM RUN 2025 TO CHAMPION DOMESTIC WORKERS' RIGHTS

The streets of Hatirjheel came alive with footsteps of solidarity as more than 2,000 participants, including 400 domestic workers, joined the Oxfam Run 2025 to demand dignity, fair treatment, and formal recognition for over 4 million domestic workers in Bangladesh. Organized by Oxfam in Bangladesh with the support of Global Affairs Canada, the event marked a public call under the slogan “Advocacy Beyond Walls”, placing domestic workers’ rights at the heart of public and policy discourse.

Runners, activists, youth groups, diplomats, and professionals joined forces in a 7.5 km run, rallying for the urgent inclusion of domestic workers under national labor laws.



“We are highly dependent on our domestic workers in urban areas. Yet, they remain among the most exploited,” said Mohammad Azaz, Administrator of Dhaka North City Corporation, who attended the event as chief guest.

A.H.M. Shafiquzzaman, Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, added, *“We are working to formally recognize domestic workers, ensuring their access to fair wages, skills training, and entitlements like leave and safe working conditions.”*

Hamidur Rahman, Animul Hasan, and Abul Hasnat Kabir secured the top three positions in the male category, while Sweety Akter, Tamanna Afrin Mitul, and Taslima Akter led in the female category. A special children’s run also highlighted inclusivity and joy.

Mahmuda Sultana, Acting Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh, stated, *“This run is not just a moment—it’s a movement. Recognizing domestic workers as workers is not solely a policy issue, it’s a mindset shift we must embrace as a society.”*



WATCH



VISIT EVENT PAGE



NEWS

SPOTLIGHT

PLUMBERS OF THE WORLD: REFLECTING ON THE LEGACY AND FUTURE OF THE ROHINGYA RESPONSE HELD IN COX'S BAZAR

Oxfam in Bangladesh, in collaboration with the Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), hosted the “Plumbers of the World: Legacy and Realities of Rohingya Response” in Cox’s Bazar on 29 January 2025. Attended by over 300 humanitarian actors, government officials, and development experts, the event revisited the evolution of the Rohingya humanitarian response, highlighted emerging challenges and a sustainable future



Joining the event, Md Kamrul Hasan ndc, Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, emphasized: *“We should focus on long-term resilience. Partnerships are essential in sustaining these efforts.”*

“We must recognize the human side of the crisis and ensure dignified lives for all,” said Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, RRRC Commissioner. Sumbul Rizvi, UNHCR Representative, stated, *“Sustainable refugee responses require community-driven, development-linked strategies.”*



Following the inaugural session, two high-level panel discussions held. The first discussion, “Building Resilience Through WASH: Today’s Challenges, Tomorrow’s Solutions,” brought together senior officials and sector experts including Abu Saleh Mohammad Obaidullah, Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (ARRRC), and Julien Graveleau, WASH Sector Coordinator, ISCG. They were joined by Mohammad Golam Muktedir (DPHE Dhaka), Syduzzaman Chowdhury (Camp-in-Charge, Teknaf), Manish Kumar Agrawal (Concern Worldwide), Mehbuba Jabin (GiHA), Enamul Hoque (Oxfam), Grover H. M. Casilla (UNHCR), Caroline W. Muturi (IOM), and Zahidul Mamun (UNICEF). The panel emphasized the urgency of integrated, gender-responsive WASH systems for long-term resilience.

The second panel discussion, “Together We Thrive: Synergizing Efforts for a Sustainable Future for Rohingya and Host Communities,” highlighted the power of collaboration and local leadership. Speakers included Bimal Chandra Dey Sarker (Mukti Cox’s Bazar), Md Shamsud Douza (ARRRC), Abu Murshed Chowdhury (PHALS), S.M.A. Rashid (NGO Forum), Abul Kashem (Help Cox’s Bazar), Sheuli Sharma (JNUS), Abul Monjur (DPHE Cox’s Bazar), and Akmal Shareef (Action contre la Faim).

During the event, Oxfam launched a photobook “Plumbers of the World: Legacy and Realities of Rohingya Response”—a compelling visual narrative documenting Oxfam’s work since 2017. Alongside the book, a two-day photo exhibition drew over 5,000 visitors, paying tribute to unsung humanitarians. From Saiful, a Rohingya youth trained in solar repairs, to Rubiya, a host community mother turned entrepreneur—their stories showcased innovation, resilience, and potential. *“These stories remind us of the courage and strength in every corner of the camps,”* said Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh.



FIND DETAILS



WATCH



PRESS RELEASE

SPOTLIGHT

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 'ANIRBAN – RISE & LEAD' LAUNCHED



On 8 February 2025, Oxfam in Bangladesh and WaterAid Bangladesh jointly launched “Anirban – Rise & Lead”, a leadership development program designed to empower mid-career women professionals and support their re-entry into leadership roles after career breaks. The initiative aims to challenge structural and societal barriers to gender equality in the workplace. Launched at a hotel in Dhaka, the program drew attention from prominent professionals and changemakers across sectors.



Humaira Azam, Managing Director of LankaBangla Finance, praised the initiative, stating, *“Success requires more than academic qualifications—it demands confidence, communication, and the strength to rise after every setback.”*



Speaking at the inauguration, Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh, noted, *“Despite many strides, women continue to face invisible barriers that stall their careers. Anirban is about removing those barriers and building an inclusive leadership pipeline.”*



Hasin Jahan, Country Director of WaterAid Bangladesh, highlighted, *“By providing mentorship and guidance, we can help women return to work with confidence, enabling them to contribute their valuable skills and perspectives to leadership roles.”*

The event featured a panel discussion, “Breaking Barriers: Women’s Leadership in the Modern Workplace,” moderated by Rup Sen, leadership coach at ChangeMantras. Panelists included Uma Chatterjee (ChangeMantras), Kavita Bose (Plan International), Shaheen Anam (Manusher Jonno Foundation), Rubaiyat Sarwar (Innovation Consulting), Hasane Ara Begum (ADB), and Maherin Ahmed (CIMMYT), who addressed institutional challenges and called for transformative shifts in workplace policies, leadership culture, and gender norms. The event concluded with a LabTalk and Career Fair, offering networking opportunities between aspiring women leaders and potential employers from various industries committed to gender inclusion.

[LEARN MORE](#)[EXPLORE DETAILS](#)

SPOTLIGHT

DIALOGUE URGED UNIFIED ACTION TO COUNTER MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION FOR BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENT

As Bangladesh navigates an important phase in its development, policymakers, national experts, media leaders, and development practitioners urged concerted efforts at a national dialogue to address the spread of misinformation and disinformation that threatens inclusive development, institutional trust, and social cohesion.

The dialogue, titled “Media in the Age of Misinformation and Disinformation – Challenges, Responsibilities, and the Path Forward for Development”, was organized by PIB and Oxfam in Bangladesh under the Development Media Forum initiative on 23 March 2025. It created a platform to explore how misleading information distorts public perception across crucial sectors such as environment, gender, economy, disaster response, and the Rohingya crisis.

The dialogue emphasized the urgent need for coordinated responses that preserve press freedom while restoring public trust and ethical communication.

“



Speaking at the event, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said, *“A society can only thrive when truth is protected, not manipulated. Instead of distorting facts for political or financial gain, we must strengthen institutions to serve people with integrity. Let us build a future where facts inform policy, justice leads governance, and the public interest rises above all else.”*

“

“We are at war with falsehood — and facts are our frontline defence. Media reform is not about control; it’s about restoring credibility, truth, and public accountability.” said Faruk Wasif, Director General of, Press Institute Bangladesh (PIB).



“



Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh, said, *“From gender-based disinformation to communal rumormongering, we must act together to protect people, not just platforms.”*



READ MORE

RMG SECTOR MUST LEAD BANGLADESH'S PUSH FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY

Bangladesh's readymade garment (RMG) sector must play a leading role in advancing renewable energy adoption, speakers urged at a high-level policy dialogue titled "Pathways to a Just Energy Transition: Balancing Sustainability, Equity, and Industry Growth in the RMG Sector," held at The Daily Star Centre on 13 February 2025. The event was co-hosted by Oxfam in Bangladesh and The Daily Star, bringing together policymakers, climate experts, development leaders, and media.

While Bangladesh remains a low carbon-emitting country, experts argued that it can emerge as a global frontrunner in carbon reduction, especially as one of the nation's most vulnerable to climate change. In his keynote, Dr. Mohammad Emran Hasan, Head of Oxfam's Climate Justice and Natural Resource Rights (CJNRR), noted that the RMG sector alone could save over 1,159 kilotonnes of oil equivalent energy annually through efficiency and renewable integration.

Panelists called for policy alignment, tax exemptions on renewables, and a clear timeline to achieve net-zero emissions.



Faruque Hassan, Former President, BGMEA, said, *"We are advocating for rooftop solar energy, particularly in areas with major projects. The adoption of solar energy requires the integration of various components, which demands financial support."*

Ashish Damle, Oxfam's Country Director, stated, *"Bangladesh must show bold leadership by aligning national ambitions with international climate justice frameworks. This is the moment to act."*

justice frameworks. This is the moment to act."Azad Abul Kalam of ActionAid stressed the importance of energy sovereignty, while Wasiur Rahman Tonmoy from Manusher Jonno Foundation pointed out the lack of gender and marginal group inclusion in existing policies. Others, like Sohanur Rahman from YouthNet Global and Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury from UIU, emphasized the urgency of green jobs, youth skill development, and technical preparedness for solar transition.

The event concluded with a unified call to prioritize just transition, inclusivity, and inter-ministerial collaboration to ensure a sustainable energy future for Bangladesh.



CLIMATE, RESOURCE AND ACTIONS

EARTH CHAMPIONS BOOT CAMP EMPOWERS YOUTH FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



From 14–19 January 2025, Oxfam in Bangladesh hosted the Earth Champions Programme (ECP) in partnership with the Bangladesh Youth Environmental Initiative (BYEI) at Savar in Dhaka. The five-day residential boot camp brought together 30 young leaders from climate-vulnerable regions to build their knowledge and advocacy skills around climate justice, resilience, and ecological equity.

Through sessions on planetary boundaries, ecofeminism, political ecology, and colonial roots of environmental crises, the program fostered critical dialogue and a justice-centered approach to climate action. Participants also visited Bhawal National Forest to explore biodiversity and indigenous conservation practices.

The youth committed to launching Earth Clubs and developing Community Action Projects, five of which will receive short-term funding. The initiative, aligned with Oxfam's CJNRR programme, aims to decolonize climate narratives and uplift marginalized voices.

“

It changed how I see the environment and connected me with changemakers for life! — Unuching Marma, ECP Fellow 2025

CLIMATE, RESOURCE AND ACTIONS

SIDA AND OXFAM NOVIB VISITED BANGLADESH TO EXPLORE RIVER GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS UNDER TROSA PROGRAMME

Sida and Oxfam Novib recently visited Bangladesh to gain insights into the country's river governance challenges and the multi-layered approach of the Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) programme.

During their visit to the Meghna Basin (Sunamganj) and Brahmaputra Basin (Kurigram), they observed some key initiatives led by Oxfam in Bangladesh and its partners Center for Natural Resource Studies- CNRS and RDRS Bangladesh.

In Sunamganj, they explored fisheries habitat restoration in Halir Haor, river management concerns in Jadukata River, and co-management efforts in Tanguar Haor. Meanwhile, In Kurigram, they engaged with fisher communities affected by river erosion and learned how women in fisheries are organizing to claim their rights. The team also attended a workshop on Bandal technology in Jinjiram River, where communities are collaborating to preserve indigenous knowledge and combat erosion.

Since 2023, TROSA2: Rivers, Rights, and Resilience has been working across Bangladesh,



ECONOMIES THAT EMPOWER

EXPERTS HIGHLIGHTED PRIVATE SECTOR'S ROLE IN ADVANCING INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The role of the private sector in shaping Bangladesh's development future was in sharp focus at the Private Sector Engagement Conclave 2025, organized by Oxfam in Bangladesh on 12 January 2025. The event brought together policymakers, business leaders, development partners, and civil society representatives to explore how responsible and inclusive business practices can accelerate the country's sustainable growth.



Speaking as chief guest, Chowdhury Ashiq Mahmud Bin Harun, Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) said,

"The private sector has immense potential to catalyze transformative change. Through collaborative action, we can unlock innovative solutions that foster inclusive and sustainable development."

Md. Mushfiqur Rahman, Chairman of the SME Foundation, called for policy reforms to simplify trade for SMEs, while Hosna Ferdous Sumi, Senior Private Sector Advisor at the World Bank, underscored the importance of SME-focused green financing and environmental partnerships.

Oxfam presented results from its flagship initiatives—the Private Sector Rapid Care Analysis (PS RCA) and the Enterprise Development Programme (EDP)—showcasing how inclusive entrepreneurship, gender-sensitive business models, and socially responsible partnerships can contribute to national development goals.

Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh, reiterated Oxfam's long-standing commitment to tackling poverty and inequality:

"The private sector must be at the center of solutions that are equitable, resilient, and leave no one behind."



The conclave concluded with a call to action for stronger stakeholder collaboration to align business ambitions with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—ensuring economic growth that is both people- and planet-centered.



READ MORE

ECONOMIES THAT EMPOWER

OSIIP 2.0 DEMO DAYS HIGHLIGHTED YOUTH-LED INNOVATIONS FOR CLIMATE AND SOCIAL IMPACT

The OSIIP 2.0 Demo Days, held in Khulna and Chattogram in Marcy 2025, celebrated the ingenuity of rural youth tackling climate resilience, gender equity, and economic empowerment through bold, community-rooted ventures. Showcasing five standout startups—from IoT-powered school transport to floating farms and smart honey tech—the event highlighted how innovation and social impact go hand in hand.

Initiatives like Pupil School Bus Ltd., Shutkiz, Eco-Sentinels, Green Fiber, and Ash Shaafee Bee Tech are reshaping local economies while addressing urgent environmental and social challenges. Powered by Oxfam's Social Innovation and Incubator Programme (OSIIP), these ventures have grown through seed funding, mentorship, and hands-on bootcamps.

With support from BYEAH and Exemplary Consulting Ltd., OSIIP 2.0 is proving that when youth lead with purpose, innovation becomes a powerful force for inclusive, lasting change.



GENDER JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

INTERNATIONAL NGOS IN BANGLADESH URGED IMMEDIATE ACTIONS ON RAPE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT INCIDENTS, CALLING FOR JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS

In response to the alarming incidents of rape, sexual harassment, and violence against women and children, international NGOs—Oxfam in Bangladesh, ActionAid, Plan International, and Save the Children—jointly called for immediate action, survivor-centred justice, and the full enforcement of human rights protections 11 March 2025.

Welcoming the government's zero-tolerance stance and commitment to fast-track investigations and trials, the INGOs urged its prompt implementation and long-term policy enforcement. The statement followed nationwide protests led by survivors, students, and activists demanding justice and change.

Recent data from ASK revealed 294 cases of violence in just two months, including 96 rapes—44 involving children. The INGOs condemned moral policing, victim-blaming, and shrinking civic space.

The organisations reaffirmed their solidarity with affected communities and called for legal reforms, digital safety, and comprehensive protection systems to ensure dignity, justice, and safe futures for all.



EU AMBASSADOR VISITED SYLHET, WITNESSING THE TEA INDUSTRY AND ENGAGING WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS


Bangladesh, the world's 10th largest tea producer and 9th largest exporter, thrives on the labour of over 350,000 tea workers—many of whom face systemic inequality and poor working conditions. In a recent field visit, H.E. Michael Miller, Ambassador of the European Union to Bangladesh, joined Oxfam in Bangladesh and partner ECDO in Sylhet to witness the impact of the Empowering Women Through Civil Society Actors (EWCSA) project, funded by the EU.

The visit provided a platform for tea workers—particularly women—to share their lived experiences, struggles, and aspirations. A street drama performed by members of the tea worker community brought to life the richness of their culture, resilience, and the pressing issues they face daily. The day also featured an interactive dialogue with labour reform commission members, union leaders, civil society actors, and local government officials, focusing on advancing labour rights and sustainable reforms in the tea sector.

Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh, along with EU representatives and ECDO, reaffirmed their joint commitment to promoting decent work, gender justice, and a sustainable future for Bangladesh's tea communities.

HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS AND ROHINGYA RESPONSE

GLOBAL INACTION WILL DEEPEN ROHINGYA CRISIS, INGOS WARN AS UN CHIEF ANTÓNIO GUTERRES VISITS BANGLADESH



With the humanitarian response to the Rohingya crisis facing severe funding shortages and shifting global priorities, the need for renewed and sustained international commitment has never been more urgent. As U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres visited Bangladesh, the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) operating in Bangladesh, called for immediate and coordinated action to sustain life-saving assistance, innovative response strategies, and a dedicated mission that ensures stability and dignity for over one million Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

The International NGOs- ACF, ActionAid, Cordaid, Concern Worldwide, DRC, Handicap International, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children, and World Vision- urged the international community to step up support before the situation deteriorates further on 14 March 2025.

Now in its eighth year, the Rohingya crisis continues to strain Bangladesh's resources as donor commitments dwindle amid global crises. A Triple Nexus Approach, linking humanitarian relief, development, and peacebuilding, is crucial to reducing dependency and fostering self-reliance.



[READ MORE](#)

HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS AND ROHINGYA RESPONSE

PILOTING VOLUNTEERISM FOR FASTER, LOCALIZED DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN BANGLADESH



To strengthen community-led disaster response, JAGO NARI, with technical support from Oxfam in Bangladesh, has launched a three-year pilot project aimed at institutionalizing volunteerism in Bangladesh. The initiative focuses on building a robust local volunteer pool to respond effectively to cyclones, storm surges, and riverbank erosion—frequent threats in vulnerable regions.

Through structured training, coordination, and stakeholder engagement, the programme is equipping volunteers with the knowledge and tools needed for timely, efficient disaster response. The project also supports capacity-building and networking to ensure long-term sustainability and integration into national disaster management systems.

By investing in grassroots leadership and preparedness, the programme is shaping a faster, more resilient local response model for disaster-prone communities across Bangladesh.

HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS AND ROHINGYA RESPONSE

AUSTRALIAN HUMANITARIAN PARTNERSHIP LEADED CROSS-CONSORTIUM WORKSHOP IN COX'S BAZAR TO STRENGTHEN IMPACT IN ROHINGYA AND HOST COMMUNITIES

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)-Funded Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) Bangladesh Centrality of Protection in Protracted Crises (CPPC) Consortium (Oxfam, Care and Plan) is working in Cox's Bazar District to improve the lives of people living in the camps and local populations affected by the influx. In collaboration with Plan International and Oxfam in Bangladesh, the activities are focused on Disaster Risk Reduction, Education, Livelihood, Protection, and WASH activities implemented by the local and national partners.

Jointly organized by CARE Bangladesh, Oxfam and Plan International Bangladesh with SAVE consortiums, the AHP Support Unit (AHPSU) from the DFAT led a cross-consortium workshop in Cox's Bazar recently. The discussion revolved around the progress of the activities and support required for creating ample impact.

Jason Brown (Partnership Director) and Laura Holbeck (Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Manager) of AHPSU led the workshop. A delegation from the Australian High Commission, including the First Secretary – Humanitarian, was present at the workshop, along with Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC).

LIGHTING THE WAY TO PROTECTION: OXFAM AND PARTNER EMPOWER COMMUNITIES WITH SOLAR SKILLS

In a move toward safer, more resilient communities, Oxfam in Bangladesh, in partnership with Mukti Cox's Bazar, has launched the "Our Light – Our Protection – Our Responsibility" project across the FDMN camps and Hnila host community in Teknaf.

The initiative focuses on community-led lighting solutions to improve safety and reduce protection risks, particularly for women, girls, and the elderly. A total of 25 participants from refugee and host communities were trained in solar streetlight repair and maintenance through a 120-hour certified course aligned with the National Skills Development Framework.

Post-training, the newly formed light maintenance groups successfully repaired 180 solar streetlights across Camps 3, 4, 12, 19, 22, and Hnila. These lights now provide safer access to WASH facilities and public spaces, mitigating risks of GBV, theft, and harassment. Beyond safety, the project nurtures livelihoods and technical leadership. Certified trainees are now recognized by camp authorities as local resources, equipped to support current needs and potentially pursue income opportunities in the future—whether through repatriation or third-country resettlement.

HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS AND ROHINGYA RESPONSE

FOLK SONGS INSPIRE ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND GBV PREVENTION IN UKHIYA

To raise awareness on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and promote gender equality, Oxfam in Bangladesh, in partnership with PROTTYASHI, organized a folk song event on 26–27 February 2025 in Ukhiya. Over 210 community members attended, including women, men, youth, and local leaders.

The event featured six thematic folk songs addressing GBV, harmful social norms, child protection, gender-responsive climate justice, women's empowerment, and available support services. By blending cultural storytelling with key advocacy messages, the performances engaged the audience meaningfully.

Community feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with calls for more such events. The initiative demonstrated how edutainment can effectively foster dialogue and build grassroots momentum for gender justice in vulnerable communities.



OXFAM NOVIB VISITED ROHINGYA CAMPS TO ASSESS RESPONSE AMID RISING UNCERTAINTY

Since the massive influx in 2017, Oxfam has been at the forefront of the Rohingya response. To witness Oxfam's work and assess the evolving realities and challenges, Pepijn Gerrits, Director of Programmes at Oxfam Novib; Gerard Steehouwer, Unit Manager for Climate Resilient Communities at Oxfam Novib; and Ashish Damle, Country Director of Oxfam in Bangladesh, recently visited the Rohingya camps.

During the visit, they explored some infrastructure projects, including the world's largest faecal sludge treatment plant and desalination facilities—key to improving living conditions.

The Rohingya response faces growing uncertainty due to global challenges, geopolitical issues, and funding crises. Addressing these issues and ensuring a sustainable response requires collective efforts from the international community, government, donors, and partners.

Oxfam in Bangladesh remains committed to supporting Rohingya and host communities and advocating for sustainable solutions.

OUT OF THE BOX

FILM FOR CHANGE

BANGLADESH'S FIRST SOCIAL FILM INCUBATION PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Oxfam in Bangladesh, in collaboration with the Department of Journalism, Media, and Communication (JMC) at Daffodil International University (DIU), launched Film for Change—the country's first film incubation program focused on driving social transformation through cinema in February 2025

The initiative aims to nurture a new generation of filmmakers who are passionate about justice, equality, and the power of storytelling. Through this program, young storytellers from across Bangladesh were invited to submit short film concepts on themes such as climate justice, gender equality, workers' rights, humanitarian crises, natural resources, the Rohingya issue, and river and water rights.

Out of hundreds of submissions, 10 powerful stories have been selected for the month-long incubation program. These finalists have received training, mentorship, and film-making grants under the guidance of some of the country's most acclaimed filmmakers and experts.



"Oxfam has always worked to challenge stereotypes and create space for unheard voices. Film for Change will help young filmmakers tell new kinds of stories—stories of those who are rarely seen or heard," said Mahmuda Sultana, Program Director at Oxfam in Bangladesh.

Dr. Aftab Hossain, Head of JMC at DIU, added, *"We are proud to be part of this pioneering initiative. It will help young filmmakers sharpen their craft and take a big step toward becoming professional storytellers."*



The inaugural event also featured sessions on advocacy and social impact filmmaking by Dr. Jamil Ahmed, and a discussion on development communication by Md Sariful Islam, Head of Influencing, Communications Advocacy and Media at Oxfam in Bangladesh. Beyond filmmaking, Film for Change aspires to raise awareness, amplify youth voices, and stimulate policy conversations that promote equity and social justice in Bangladesh.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP

OXFAM IN BANGLADESH HOSTED ANNUAL LEARNING WORKSHOP TO STRENGTHEN IMPACT AND STRATEGY

From 5–9 January 2025, Oxfam in Bangladesh held its Annual Learning and Reflection Workshop, providing a vital platform to review achievements, challenges, and lessons from the past year. Facilitated by Country Director Ashish Damle, the workshop brought together teams across the organization to explore how national and global shifts are shaping development work.

Through group discussions, data review, and evidence-based reflections, participants developed actionable insights to strengthen future programming. The collaborative sessions—supported by dedicated committees—encouraged diverse perspectives and practical problem-solving.

The workshop reaffirmed Oxfam’s shared commitment to adaptive learning, inclusive leadership, and driving lasting impact for vulnerable communities across Bangladesh.



LEADERSHIP LAB FOSTERED SELF-REFLECTION AND CONVERSATIONS

From 1–4 February 2025, Oxfam in Bangladesh concluded the second session of its transformative Leadership Lab, focusing on the complexities of leadership, internal politics, and negotiation. The lab explored how leaders can navigate conflicting values and truths, while fostering dialogue, empowerment, and introspection.

Participants engaged in thought-provoking discussions on confrontation versus conflict, learning to address discomfort constructively rather than avoid it. The session emphasized the importance of self-awareness, collective learning, and challenging norms to build inclusive, resilient leadership.

The four-day experience was intense, reflective, and enriching—shaping how participants see their roles within larger systems of change.

DAY OBSERVANCE

OXFAM IN BANGLADESH MARKED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WITH REFLECTIONS AND DIALOGUE ON GENDER JUSTICE

On the Occasion of International Women's Day, Oxfam in Bangladesh hosted an engaging internal event, featuring actress Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed and Roksana Anzuman Nicole, Assignment Editor at Jamuna TV. The session fostered reflections and dialogues, and both speakers shared their insights on the realities of gender justice, contemporary challenges, and the future of women's rights in Bangladesh.

The event also featured self-reflective letter readings and open discussions, capturing personal emotions, struggles, and aspirations, while reinforcing a call to action to accelerate progress toward gender equality.



THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY IS FAR FROM OVER. LET'S CONTINUE TO CHALLENGE INJUSTICE, AND BUILD A WORLD WHERE EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL CAN LIVE WITH DIGNITY, SAFETY, AND OPPORTUNITY.

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JANUARY 2025

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ARTICLE AND OP-ED

Is the COP process failing to tackle climate change?

COP29 became another example of the bloated, cumbersome process that struggles to translate discussions into meaningful actions

Dabaraj Dey

The exact words from President Trump while signing the executive orders and withdrawing the US from the Paris Climate Agreement were "...we're going to save over a trillion dollars by withdrawing from that treaty."

Earlier in his remarks he also mentioned: "I'm immediately withdrawing from the unfair, one-sided Paris climate accord rip-off. The United States will not sabotage our own industries while China pollutes with impunity."

This also got a loud cheer from the audience.

As the world struggles with the spiraling impacts of climate change, the role of the Conference of the Parties (COP) under the United Nations

One of the most glaring shortcomings of COP is its failure to deliver on financial commitments. Developed countries pledged at COP15 in 2009 to mobilize \$100 billion annually by 2020 to help developing nations adapt to and mitigate climate change.

This promise remains unmet, leaving countries like Bangladesh with insufficient resources to build climate resilience. The delays in operationalizing the loss and damage fund, agreed upon at COP27 in 2022, further illustrate the disconnect between COP declarations and real-world action.

For Bangladesh and other vulnerable nations, the failure



IS THE COP PROCESS FAILING TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE?

by Dabaraj Dey



READ MORE

A call for sustainable reforms in our financial sector

SHADMAN SHAKIB AHMED

Bangladesh is standing on the edge of a monumental opportunity. As one of the most dynamic economies in South Asia, it has witnessed remarkable growth in recent years. However, this progress has not been without its challenges—especially in terms of climate vulnerability, social equity, and the sustainability of the financial system that fuels this growth. The current economic model, while largely focusing on the commercial needs of the corporate landscape, is poorly adapting to

leading to an increase in non-performing loans (NPLs) and a lack of confidence in the sector. This misallocation of resources not only impedes sustainable development but also stifles the potential of emerging sectors, particularly those focused on green and socially responsible initiatives.

What made the situation grimmer is the lack of transparency and accountability in financial reporting, which has created an environment where the full impact of investments is not fully understood or acknowledged. This is especially true in the realm of environ-

It is not enough for banks to simply comply with regulations; they must be held responsible for the broader impact of their investment decisions. While policies like the Sustainable Finance Policy 2020 provide a foundation, they lack robust monitoring standards and fail to effectively measure their impact. This underscores the urgent need for introducing stronger governance frameworks that ensure environmental and social risks are considered in all lending decisions.

We must create a financial ecosystem that is genuinely inclusive. From

make it easier for international investors to assess the risks and opportunities associated with investing in the country.

We must establish clear, transparent criteria for what qualifies as "green" or "sustainable" investment, ensuring that there is no ambiguity in the types of projects that receive green financing. This will help prevent "green-washing" and ensure that investments are genuinely contributing to environmental and social goals.

Finally, the government should cre-

A CALL FOR SUSTAINABLE REFORMS IN OUR FINANCIAL SECTOR

by Shadman Shakib Ahmed



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COMMUNICATIONS AND INFLUENCING IN NUMBERS

2.6M

PEOPLE REACHED
THROUGH SOCIAL
MEDIA

292

DIGITAL PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT

250

STATIC
DESIGN ASSETS

42,000

IMPRESSIONS ON
YOUTUBE

150+

MEDIA
REPORTS

42

MOTION DESIGNS
AND VIDEO
CONTENTS

21,941

LINK CLICKS ON
LINKEDIN

718.7%

INCREASE IN
FACEBOOK REACH



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