

CDS: An Intermediary and Support Organisation

An Interview with the Executive Director of CDS by Rashed Mahmud Titumir



NGO, and as long as there are local-level development groups requesting assistance, CDS will be there to help them," adds Chowdhury while introducing CDS.

As an intermediary and support organisation CDS works with and for the local-level organisations who have

enlisted as partners of CDS and with those CDS has been maintaining a network relationship. "We have found, in most cases, CDS partners do not have the proper skills or expertise, appropriate manpower or needed materials to manage their organisations," says Chowdhury, adding, "thus, the first and foremost role of CDS is to foster fledgling organisations to graduate into self-reliant, self-standing NGOs capable of independently managing local, national and international activities."

In translating those into reality, CDS provides technical support for institution building, capacity building, communication support service to help local-level organisation get informed of the latest developments, and financial support for different development activities. It also demonstration units to test innovative ideas.

CDS believes in promotion of volunteerism and emphasises capacity building of local development organisations. "Our Village Development and Networking programme provides technical assistance in strengthening the management capabilities and institutional development process of local partner associations and in sharing community development issues and problems to enhance effective communication among NGOs," says Chowdhury.

CDS has been operating its

family planning section for the last decade with 14 partners' agency projects and a fifteenth directly managed by CDS. Health, family planning and related development services have been made available through the said organisations to 817 villages under 94 unions of 20 thanas in 20 districts of the country.

In order to uphold justice and thereby ensure the enforcement of human rights and have a society free from exploitation, CDS started village level free legal assistance programme since 1991 in Rajshahi division to offer free

and settling disputes by establishing village committees empowered with the knowledge of legal rights and participatory women's rights," adds Chowdhury.

Knowing fully well of the influence of television nowadays, CDS is now running a media campaign on gender-related issues to raise awareness. "The goal is to wipe out long-standing sexist mentalities and plant the seed of pro-human, pro-development ideologies," says the executive director of CDS.

concept for the development agencies — Shramadana — which involves the voluntary donation and sharing of people's resources, especially their time, thoughts and physical efforts. Elaborating, CDS chief executive says, the community accomplishes its objective of providing for public or private utilities and services by paying for it through levies or taxes or by the direct hiring of other people's labour. "Initially, it was difficult to make people understand or apply this concept," continues Chowdhury "after some time, they realise it brings fruit to every body."

lages is an attempt to get local communities understand the issues and problems confronting them, so that their full potential could be utilised and their resource mobilised as a force within a total community development approach," says CDS chief. "We place emphasis on what people can achieve by utilisation and mobilisation of available, local resource, including their own-physical labour," adds Chowdhury.

Chowdhury strongly advocated that the people, especially the disadvantaged youth and women, should be provided equal opportunities for growth and fulfillment and they must be given due consideration as a valuable part of the community and should be involved in the local level planning and decision making process.

He also said that their role in the development process in the most vital and they should be involved as partners in progress.

"Shramadana provide them a start by giving them opportunities to plan and participate in programmes that can utilise their skills. So, we need much more active interaction between the various segments of the civil society and government in all aspects from planning to implementation as none can still claim they have achieved what they want to. If it takes off, that day will not be too far when we all will live in a society that will provide equal opportunities to all," concludes Chowdhury.



legal support to poor and helpless man and women. "We developed an institutional framework for medita-

As CDS believes in sustainable village-based development through people centred approach, it has started new

"What we are trying to achieve through Shramadana-related community activities involving people of the vil-

PIONEER AND THE BEST BATIK IN BANGLADESH



GUP—BATIK

Produced by the village women, export quality GUP Batik is comfortable and elegance in all seasons.

GUP Handicrafts include a great variety of artistic products equally useful for household and offices.

For more information please contact:

GONO UNNAYAN PROCHESTA (GUP)

13B/10B Babar Road, Block-B
Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207

Bangladesh

Tel: 813216, 324925

Fax: 880-02-813095

For emancipating the prisoners of poverty, Comilla Proshika Centre For Development (CPCD) remains committed to people's development movement in Bangladesh. With this end in view, it has been working for:

- Growth and Development of Grass-root People's Organizations
- Human Resource Development
- Capital Resource Development
- Environmental Development

CPCD wishes to congratulate various actors — people, institutions, well-wishers, donors, sponsors and Governments for their contributions in sustainable development of Bangladesh.



Comilla Proshika Centre For Development

House # 66, Road # 8A, Dhanmondi R/A
Dhaka-1209, Bangladesh
Phone : 811235, 323088-9

Preparing Communities for Disaster and Development



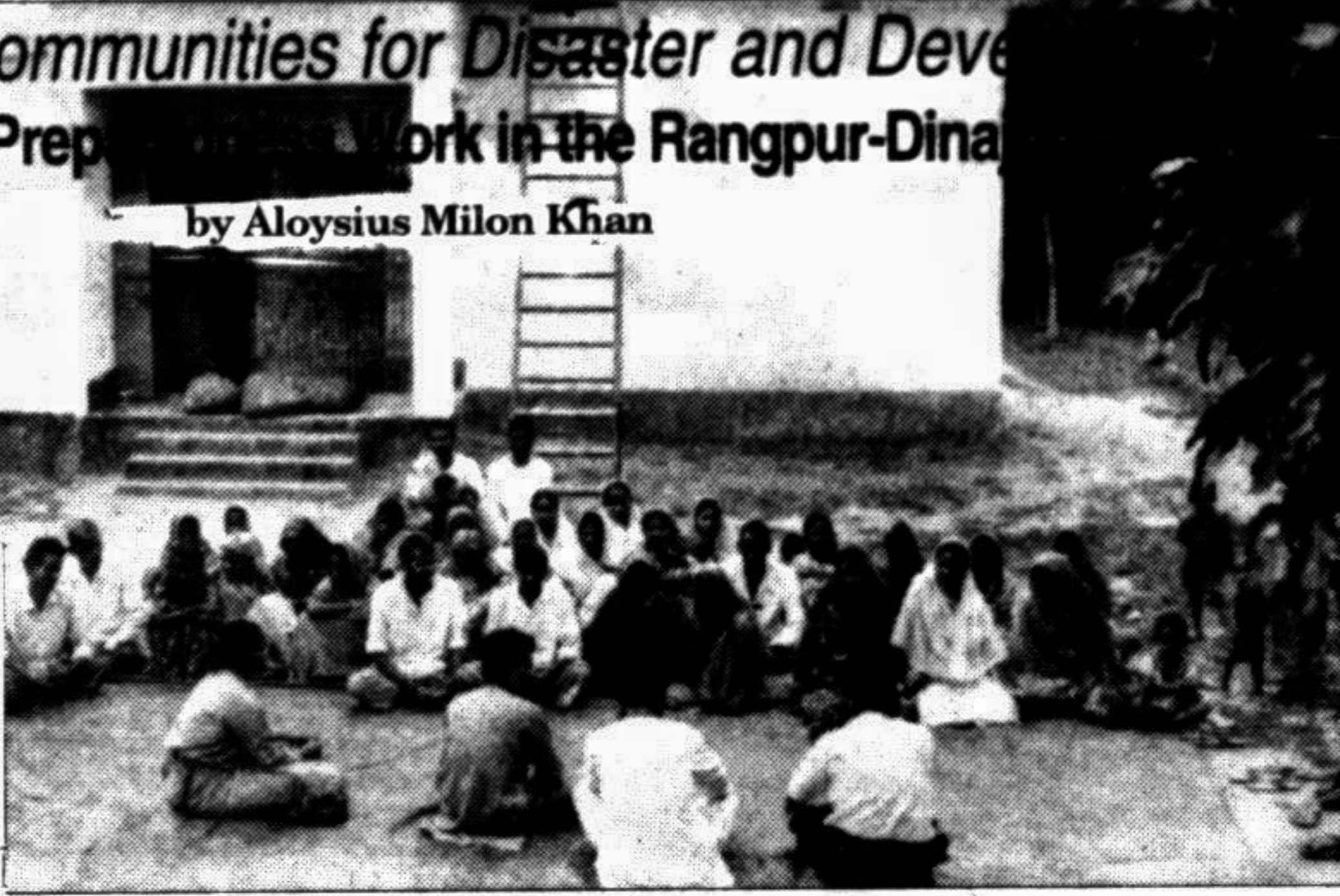
FLOODS inflict two types of damage on the rural poor. First, the immediate destruction of property and sometimes lives and the threat to survival in the aftermath of flood until normal economic life resumes. Second, the longer term reversal of development gains and economic and social rehabilitation.

An ECHO Disaster Preparedness programme, implemented by the NGO, Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS), sought to address both problems in four vulnerable districts of north-west Bangladesh. By developing both the physical and skills capacity of local associations of the poor to cope with natural disaster, the one-year project has significantly strengthened the community's ability to cope with future threats.

Ghorial Danga Union in Rajarhat Thana of Kurigram District is one of over 100 assisted with a new approach to disaster preparedness. At a meeting held outside their new community grain store, the Union Federation (a local organisation of landless groups) were discussing how they had worked during recent flood and drought disaster and how they would manage in future.

Chairman Golam Mostafa believed the training and leadership, the disaster volunteers received was critical in mobilising people to prepare for impending flood and in post-flood relief. "This time, there was less panic because people were prepared and knew what action to take when the situation became serious. Previously, fear and uncertainty caused as much problem as the rising water themselves". Equipped with improved early-warning system and of plans of action to communicate the danger and to give advice, the trained volunteers proved their worth in evacuation. They also took the lead in distributing to the most deserving cases the small stocks of relief supplies (polythene sheets, plastic containers, oral rehydration solution, foodgrains, and biscuits) the Federation had stored in readiness, and in supervising some of the rehabilitation works.

The white painted community grainstores are the most obvious and sustainable benefit of the project. Built on raised land owned by the Federation near the local market, these 18x25 buildings not only carry a buffer stock of relief materials but also store 30 tonnes of grain to provide food and seed to help agriculture recover quickly from the next flood. This multipurpose building also acts as a temporary flood shelter and Federation office and small meeting room. In normal conditions, the trained Federation leadership



PRIP TRUST

PRIP Trust is a Bangladeshi development organization which supports the strategically important initiatives and activities of the Support Organizations and Networks/Forums in Bangladesh to increase their capacity and impact.

The **goal** of PRIP Trust is to build a broad-based sustainable PVDO (Private Voluntary Development Organization) sector in Bangladesh.

Support Organizations (SOs) are PVDOs whose resources, in part or in whole, are available to help other (usually smaller) PVDOs to improve their performance and impact.

Networks/Forums (N/Fs) are groupings of PVDOs around a particular theme, issue, or problem.

PRIP Trust believes that its support to SOs and N/Fs will achieve a multiplier effect as the SOs and N/Fs will, in turn, work to support the large number of private voluntary organizations which implement development programs among the poor to enable them to have greater participation in social, economic, and civic life. PRIP Trust's target for 1996-1999 is to improve the competence/capacity of 40 SOs and N/Fs who will then increase the competence of 400 PVDOs with the potential to improve the lives of 4,000,000 poor people.

Sectors PRIP Trust has identified a few sectors in which it works. The sectors have been chosen where PVDOs have a comparative advantage over government and the business sector, PVDOs have considerable growth potential, and no other agency is taking a sector-wide perspective. The sectors are : Institutional Development; Natural Resource Management; Employment and Income Generation Activities; Non-formal Education; Disaster Management.

Services In order to achieve its goal, PRIP Trust provides the following services — technical assistance; training; flexible funding; in-house consultation; research, documentation, and dissemination of new ideas and innovations in its work with the SOs and N/Fs.

Contact Person

Aroma Goon
Chief Executive Officer
PRIP Trust
House # 56, Road # 16 (New)
Dhanmandi, Dhaka - 1209
Telephone : 815953, 819111, 810789
Fax : 880-2-816429