A Different Training for Differently Able

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ACTION Aid Bangladesh (AAB), an international organization, is currently working in more than fifty countries including Bangladesh to eradicate poverty and injustice from society. In line with its relentless endeavor to create a barrier free society for PWDs (Person With Disabilities), the organization launched a unique project, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, titled "Creating Role Models of PWDs (Person with Disability) in corporate sector of Bangladesh" to empower PWDs in corporate sector in the country. The main objective of this project is:

(1) To enhance the capacity of educated PWDs in order to make them competent for employment opportunities.

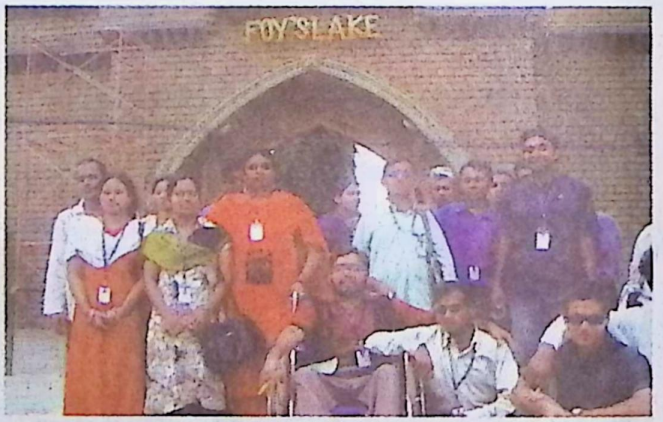
(2) To create role models for PWDs in Bangladesh as professionals in corporate houses.

The key activities of the project are to arrange an intensive training and then provide internship for disabled persons, which will eventually create an opportunity for them to help get a respectable job in the corporate sector.

According to the projects, AAB first selected twenty educated disabled people from all around the country. Most of them were postgraduates, who have crossed university overcoming various hurdles and are now facing great adversity in entering their professional lives. Of the twenty, eleven are visually impaired, eight are mobility disabled and I'm the only one with a hearing challenge. AAB sent us to YPSA- a reputed specialized non-governmental voluntary social development organization in Chittagong, for four months residential training program. It is important to mention here that the partners of the project are Action Aid Bangladesh (AAB), Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Limited and Young Power in Social Action (YPSA). The training period was July 15, 2006 to November 25, 2006. Truly speaking, I consider myself lucky for being a part of this workshop, as such opportunities for PWDs in our country is scarce. Honestly, it seems to me like a little raindrop in the vast ocean.



The highly rated training program mainly stressed on



English and ICT skills. It also included varying issues and challenges in the mainstream job market. Now, allow me to say something about what I've learned from the program.

First of all, this training restored my latent confidence, which I had lost after my hearing impairment due to wrong treatment in 2000. Then there was a ten-day business English training course that assisted me immensely to achieve proficiency. I firmly believe that my English is steadily improving after receiving this training, and it was nearly impossible for me to be competent in this alien language without such training. After that, there comes the Management and Administration training, which was a five-day course. Even though the duration of this course was very short with respect to its contents, I got to learn about managing an organization, the role of a manager, managerial goals, problem solving, planning, difference between management and administration, group, team work and the likes. I've also realized various disability issues such as definition of disability, cause of disablement, social and medical model of disability, disability and equality, disability and development, disability right, act and rehabilitation etc. from the training. For a disabled person, I reckon that it's imperative to be knowledgeable in these issues to serve or work properly for the disabled or excluded people in society.