

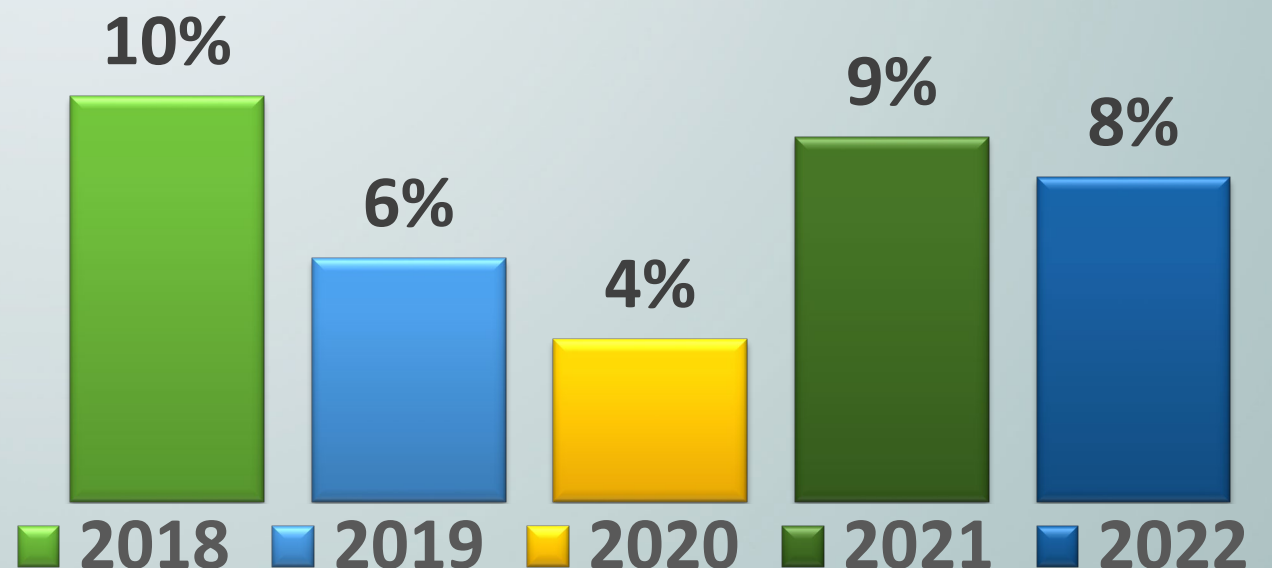
# People affected by leprosy are still facing prejudice and discrimination in society

More than 500 people affected by leprosy in Bogura District have permanent disabilities. We are looking closely into the areas in which women are most vulnerable due to discrimination and prejudice from family and society, and we are helping to address their rights.



In the absence of disability care and rehabilitations services at public health centres, people with disabilities are facing further problems, which are hampering their mobility and ability to continue their normal day-to-day activities.

## Grade 2 Disability Rate



# Our community-based approach initiatives

The Bogura Federation, an apex body of self-help groups, unites over 100 self-help groups (SHGs) of people affected by leprosy and other disadvantaged people.

It represents over 1,000 men and women, of whom 495 are affected by leprosy; while the other members have general disabilities or are other marginalized people.

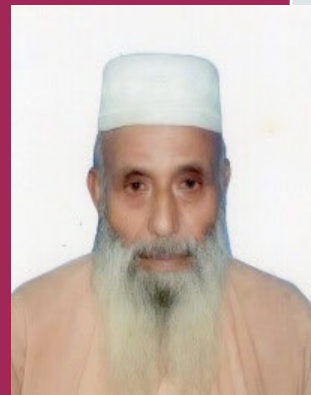
The Federation is formed of fifteen experienced leaders from the SHGs in 2014. The Federation is formally recognized as a **Community-Based Organization (CBO)** by the government in 2017.



**A Bogura Federation Meeting**

*"I am a transformed man. Now I can talk with logic, can demand my rights, and can plan what should be changed. Though often I feel desperate when I'm faced with uninterest from a stakeholder, the group helps me to overcome these frustrations. After the official registration of our Federation as a CBO, I am now even more confident about the future."*

**Mr. A.B.M. Shahid Sharif, Chairman of the Federation**



# Further Measures

We have developed strong relationships with the Leprosy Control Programs at the district and sub-district levels. The relationships have been based on trust and mutual respect. A collaborative approach has also helped us coordinate our responses and make a bigger impact on the lives of people with leprosy.

Several projects such as the *Nutrition Education Project*, *Covid 19 Support project* and the *Mental Motivator Project* have been implemented with the technical support of **Lepra Bangladesh** in the past.



**Cooking Demonstration of Nutrition Education Project**



**Covid 19 support project**



**Counselling and support by a Mental Motivator**



We will beat leprosy together

# Results and Accomplishments

✓ There has been an improvement in the physical health of people with leprosy.

✓ There has been an improvement in the mental health of people with leprosy.

✓ There has been an improvement of livelihood status among the people with leprosy.

✓ There has been a reduction in prejudice and discrimination against people with leprosy.



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

# Results and Accomplishment (continued)

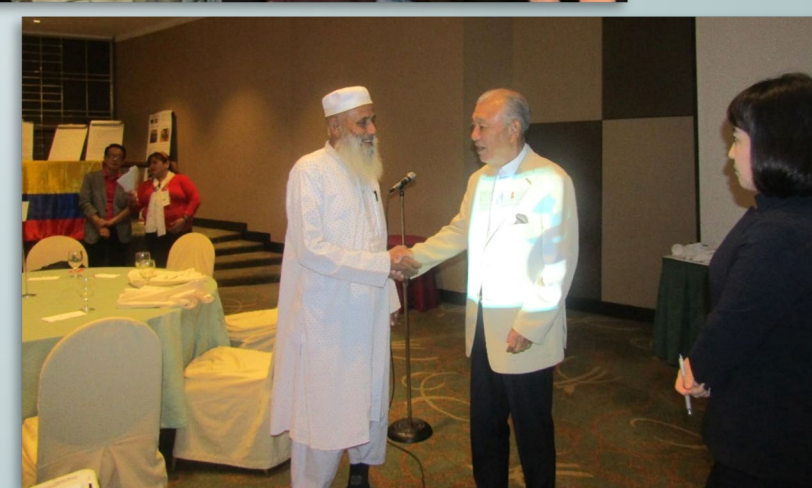
- ✓ A Federation Capacity building was established
- ✓ The partnership with the healthcare system has been strengthened
- ✓ Advocacy and Social Scheme have been established
- ✓ There has been a significant participation in the Global Forums



Wheelchairs from different sectors



Housing from the government



Participation in international programmes and conferences

# Lesson Learned – Churkuta, a model village



School



Dry pond



Pond for fish culture and fresh water reserve

## This is the story of ‘Churkuta Village’ of Jamail union at Sherpur Upazila, Bogura.

There are in total three self-help groups ‘Padda’, ‘Meghna’ and ‘Jamuna’. They were isolated from their community, where most of their relatives are living as they were recognized as leprosy patients.

Once, this dry pond area was considered a ‘leprosy village’. But, people of Churkuta Village had a dream, to reinvent their special village! They converted a once old dry pond into a fresh and fertile pond, through fish culture. The local community members came to visit their special project every day, and their village became a place for social interaction. They established two schools in their village (pre-primary & primary), and almost 95% of children are now attending school regularly. Women in this village also established a “Rice Bank”, to support their family during a crisis period.

The Local Union Parishad built new roads, connected with local community, and setup a new electric line in their village.

They have made ideal village of Churkuta and gave a new name “MONDIRPARA FADARSHO GRAM”.



New road



Temple

# Lesson Learned (continued)

- ✓ We learned that unity is strength, which leads to empowerment and has the ability to raise the voices of people with leprosy.
- ✓ Advocacy is a good strategy for gaining social benefits and building relationships with different organizations and departments of governments.
- ✓ The Federation strengthening program sets a good example for other future programs and activities.
- ✓ Projects implemented by our own members increase capacity, social inclusion and also participation in the projects.



Advocacy Meeting



Meeting with Alice Cruz

## Next Steps

- ✓ Institutionalization: Improving technical and networking capacity of the Bogura Federation (Center of Holistic Care) to manage and refer complicated cases for specialized mental health and social services.
- ✓ The formation of National Forum: The Bogura Federation continues to work to form a national level federation, in partnership with other district federations.
- ✓ Providing support for other district federations to strengthen and obtain registration by providing technical support and playing the advisory roll.
- ✓ The Federation's expectation is that each member will feel more included and enjoy their health, social and economic rights while still having the same equal opportunities as all citizens of Bangladesh should.