

Gender Fair 2010

Gender equality and women's empowerment are human rights that lie at the heart of development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Although in Bangladesh, progress has been considerable in many spheres, men and women's changing roles have also given rise to a range of new challenges that requires shift in policy making and program implementation as well as the various social and cultural values which have informed and shaped implicit societal understandings of men and women's roles and responsibilities. Therefore, for an equitable society, Bangladesh needs to sensitize the citizens on gender issues, especially to future generation.

Democracywatch has organized the **Gender Fair** under the project titled “**Gender and Governance Sensitization Program for Youth**” supported by Royal Danish Embassy as they have continuous activities regarding gender, governance, local government, anti-corruption. They do research, training and policy advocacy on related issues. The fair was held on May 12 and 13, 2010 at Diploma Engineers Institute, Ramna, Dhaka. Different organizations, policy makers, civil society, media personnel, academicians and other concern groups have been invited by Democracywatch.

The objective of the Fair was to promote gender issues and share materials developed by different organizations working towards gender equality, human rights and good governance. The Fair tried to attract attention of the policy makers, planners, civil society, media and other concerned groups.

The chief guest of the fair was Honorable Member of the Parliament and Member of the Standing Committee for Women and Child Affairs, Mrs. Meher Afroz Chumki. Other honorable guests were Chairperson Ms. Latifa Akand, Development Activist; Executive Director Taleya Rehman; Farzana Shahnaz Majid, Gender Advisor, ICDDR, B and Project Director Tahrunnesa Abdullah.



A total thirteen stalls (**BYLC, IOM, RMMRU, TIB, ICDDR, ASK, NGO Forum, Nari Moitree, WARBE Development Foundation, Karmajibi Nari, BILS including Democracywatch**) have been arranged for displaying materials on gender issues developed by various national and international agencies. Books, journals, booklets, leaflets, modules, flip charts, photo sets, stickers, posters, still photos, audio, video, pot chitro, paintings, paper clippings, stage performance etc were exhibited by the participants organization.



The Gender Fair includes another three sessions. A seminar held on the first day second session on **“Empowerment of Elected Women: Local Government Perspective’s”**. Chief Guest of the seminar and also Key note presenter was Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy, Mayor, Narayangonj Paurashava and Vice President, Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB). Elected women from different area of local government were present in the program.

Second day first session was on research report present on **“Reproductive Decision Making Role among Slum Dwellers of Dhaka City”**. This research was conducted by the 13th batch participants of Gender and Governance Training Program. The Chief Guest of this program was Geetiara Safia Chowdhury, Former Adviser Caretaker Government and Chairman and Managing Director, ADCOMM Limited. Special Guest was **Dr. Nasir Uddin**, Program, Consultant, **NATAB**. Panelists of the research report presentation were **Ms. Shipa Hafiz**, Director, Gender Justice and Advocacy, **BRAC**; **Dr. Nitai Kanti Das**, Director, Training and Communication, **PSTC**; **Ms. Farzana Shahnaz Majid**, Gender Specialist, Human Resources, **icddr,b**.



Last session was a seminar on **“Gender Budgeting”**. **The Chief Guest of this program was Ms. Sultana Kamal**, Former Adviser Caretaker Government and Executive Director, Ain O Salish Kendra. The program was chaired by Professor Latifa Akand, Chairperson, Democracywatch. The key note paper was prepared by Dr. Fahmida Khatun, Director, CPD and the paper was presented by Taleya Rehman, Executive Director, Democracywatch. Two discussants of this seminar were **Ms. Suraiya Zannath**, Senior Financial Management Specialist,

The World Bank and **Mr. Shaheen Rahman**, **freelance consultant and development activists.**

The Fair come to an end with the presentation of a play reading on the contribution of women as well as men in the history of mankind of this subcontinent who promoted gender issues in the mainstream of the society.

