

# Capitalization Report

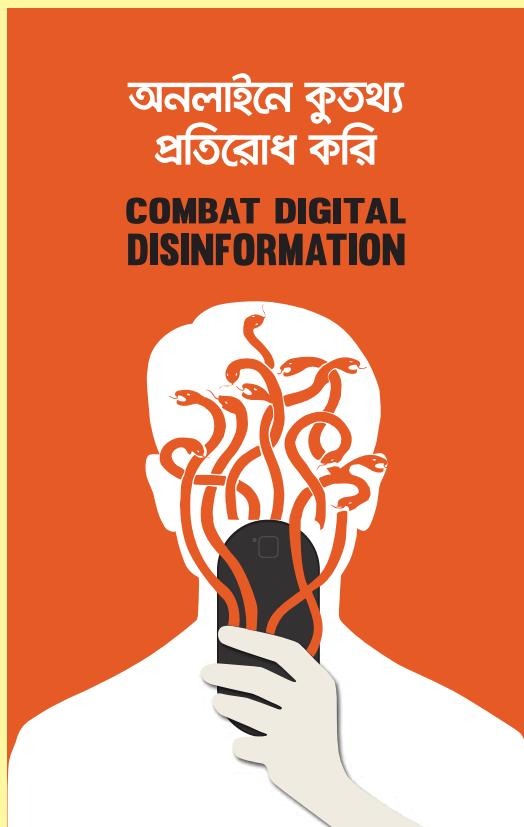
2022

Strengthening  
Traditional  
Civil Society to  
Combat Digital  
Disinformation in  
Bangladesh  
Project



# CAPITALIZATION REPORT

**Strengthening Traditional Civil Society to Combat  
Digital Disinformation in Bangladesh Project**



**Institute for Environment and Development (IED)**

## **Capitalization Report**

## **Strengthening Traditional Civil Society to Combat Digital Disinformation in Bangladesh Project**

### **Supported By**

 **The Asia Foundation**

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## Foreword

It is our great pleasure to publish this Capitalization Report on Strengthening Traditional Civil Society to Combat Digital Disinformation in Bangladesh project implemented during 10 January 2021 to 31 January 2022. The project has been implemented with the support from The Asia Foundation, Dhaka. We think, this is a new idea project.

Through this project 880 youth traditional civil society members have been developed for playing proactive role to combat digital disinformation with the aim to promote peace, harmony and social cohesion in the community. It has been observed that these youth have become very vibrant to act on this sensitive area. We would like to thanks to them all for their whole hearted participation for successful implementation of the project. It is our expectation that these youth would continue their efforts for long time.

Special thanks to The Asia Foundation (TAF), Dhaka for their strong collaboration and supports. We are grateful to the Country Representative Mr. Kazi Faisal Bin Seraj, Senior Program Manager Md. Zakaria, and other colleagues of TAF for their continuous cooperation, providing suggestions and supports.

We would also like to thank Dr. Shantanu Majumder, Professor, Department of Political Science, Dhaka University for providing creative ideas and guidance to develop the project and module for training, facilitate training sessions and implement the project activities.

Thanks to all the colleagues of IED who have been involved for their hard working to make the project successful. Thanks all whose discussion and invaluable insights provided the basis for this capitalization report.

Best wishes

Numan Ahmed Khan

## PART-1 : PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Name of the Project	:	Strengthening Traditional Civil Society to Combat Digital Disinformation in Bangladesh
Project Duration	:	January 10, 2021 – January 31, 2022
Supported By	:	The Asia Foundation (TAF), Bangladesh
Target population	:	Youth, Woman Leaders, Local Government Representatives, Government Officials, Civil Society Members, Cultural Activist, Religious Leaders, Social leaders, Journalists, Students and Community People
Project Location	:	Jashore Paurasava; Kashimpur Union, Jashore Sadar Upazilla; Mymensingh City Corporation; Dapunia Union, Mymensingh Sadar Upazilla
Beneficiaries	:	TCS Members 80, Youth 800, Workshop participants 380, Community meeting participants 360 Total direct beneficiaries 1620, Indirect 16000.

**Combat  
Digital  
Disinformation**

## PART 2: BACKGROUND

Digital Disinformation has so far been the most severe problem in using online resources (website, blog, Facebook, YouTube etc.) in Bangladesh. It is causing detrimental impacts on social cohesion, inter and intra religious harmony, freedom of expression, cultural diversity, gender sensitivity, inter-party relationship and many other aspects of social and political life. Digital disinformation has been developing a notion of singular identity instead of recognizing the fact that humans have multiple identities.

The Institute for Environment and Development (IED) views that the ongoing trend is severely impacting the chance of a tolerant society and liberal democratic state. From this standpoint, IED intends to strengthen understandings and skills of traditional civil society (TCS) to combat digital disinformation. This intervention is important in order to safeguard the citizens, particularly the youths, from being trapped into the grip of anti-liberal anti-democratic forces in the name of supremacy of a particular religion, sect or ethnicity.

Digital disinformation impacts, in particular, the lives of youths in negative ways. Consumption of unchecked disinformation online in many cases results in unaware attractions towards violent extremism, radicalism, religious fundamentalism and bigotry. It can also give birth to hatred and intolerance towards the people from "out group" on the basis of unsubstantiated perceived notion of "us" and "them".

IED views that the ongoing trend is severely impacting the chance of a tolerant society and liberal democratic state. From this standpoint, IED intends to strengthen understandings and skills of TCS members to combat digital disinformation.



### Part 3: PEOJECT OBJECTIVES

**The objectives of the project largely emphasized:**

1. The selected 80 TCS members and 800 youths will obtain skills to identify disinformation online and be conscious about the level of danger a piece of digital disinformation can create in the project areas.
2. The 880 project participants will be able to identify the disseminating digital disinformation and their ideological standpoints and other intentions and learn the process to make a positive and encouraging tolerance, harmony, fraternity, gender sensitivity, and non-violence in mainstream and viral online.
3. The 80 TCS members will make the 800 youths aware about digital disinformation and they will be trained to disseminate positive contents online highlighting tolerance, inter-religious and inter-ethnic group harmony and liberal worldview.
4. Total 740 local government representatives, GoB officials, cultural activists, women leaders, religious leaders, youths, social leaders, journalists, students, and community people would create an awareness regarding digital disinformation and its danger.

### Part 4: PEOJECT ACTIVITIES

**The following activities were carried out during the project period:**

- Module and material development by a team under the supervision of project consultant on social, political and cultural risks of the digital disinformation training course (Module includes 1. Training on social, political and cultural risks of digital disinformation 12 days' course and materials, 2. Guideline for workshops at City Corporation, Paurasava and Union level and for Journalists, 3. Guideline for community meeting, 4. Guideline for creating 10 members group by 1 TCS members) 2 members team x 20 working days each
- Orientation course to project staffs and trainers for 3 days course at the central office, Participants 15
- Selection of TCS members at City Corporation, Paurasava and Unions. 20 participants in one field. Total 80 in four (4) fields. The participants should use smartphones.
- Training on combating disinformation, 20 days course in 7 months- 3 days class in a month at 4 spots, Participants 20 (Participants will have a smartphone) each course, Total  $7 \times 4 = 28$  courses
- Meeting of 4 TCS groups for 2 months each, Participants 20
- Formation of local groups. Total group: 20 in one place. One participant to form one group which includes at least 10 members. Total groups in 4 fields x 20 = 80. Altogether 800 people will be the member of these groups

- Local-level campaign regarding DD – online campaign, rally, banner, poster and posting against disinformation in social media, Participants (20 X 4 X 10 member X 2 month)
- Community-level meeting by TCS, 3 meetings in 4 areas, total 12 meetings, Participants 30 each
- Workshop with LEB representatives, local administration, teachers, cultural activists, women leaders, religious leaders, youths, community and social leaders on social media and disinformation at City Corporation, Pourasava and Union level, 4 workshops, Participants 40 each
- Workshop with journalists at the district level, 2 workshops, Participants 25
- Workshop for local school, college and madrassa students and local dropouts, 4 workshops, Participants 40
- One day workshop in Dhaka/outside Dhaka including the best performing participants (5 from each 4 fields) and guests, Participants: 50

## Part 5: DESCRIPTION of INTERVENTIONS

### A. Training module and material development

A team of highly experienced 2 members have developed a training module with materials, guideline for workshops and meetings with the guidance of Dr. Shantanu Majumder, Professor, Department of Political Science, Dhaka University.

### B. 7-month long training on CDD in Jashore and Mymensingh

80 young traditional civil society (TCS) members of Jashore and Mymensingh have been given training for 7 months long on combating digital disinformation.

This training lasted for a total of twenty days, three days a month and seven months. Dr. Shantanu Majumder, a Professor in the Department of Political Science, Dhaka University, Jyoti Chattopadhyay, Coordinator and Siam Sarower Jamil, Assistant Coordinator, IED, participated in different sessions of these trainings which lasted from April to October. Some sessions were conducted through online due to covid pandemic situation.

The trainers were Qumresh Shahid Hafiz Adnan Riad, Amir Muhammad, Sheikh Muhammad Imran Sayeed and Aklima Ferdous Lisa.

The training includes various technical issues on Digital Disinformation. Information disorder, its identification and preventing technic, Cyber Security, Digital Hygiene, Fact Checking, Social Media Management, Information Verification technic and many other technical issues discussion in the different sessions.

In these sessions, the young TCS members were encouraged to prevent the escalating violence as a result of spreading rumors or disinformation across the country.

The outcomes are as follows:

1. 80 TCS members were trained on different techniques of information verification to combat digital disinformation.
2. Capacity developed of TSC members to play a lead role in the community on the issue.
3. In 4 field areas, 80 TCS members are ready to educate local people regarding the existence and risks. They are ready to give their support towards improvement of the good governance.

### **C. 80 groups formed with 800 members in 4 fields**

80 groups were formed as collaborators of 80 TCS members In Jashore Paurasava, Kashimpur Union, Mymensingh City Corporation and Dapunia Union. Each group has 10 dedicated members. Led by TCS members, these group members are working locally to prevent disinformation.

To assist these groups, they have been introduced to local civil society members who help them to combat digital disinformation socially. TCS members have trained them. Along with the members of this group, TCS members are working on creating awareness to prevent disinformation.

The outcomes of group formation are as follows:

1. Existence of a strong TCS forum consisting of 200 people in a locality which is active both online and offline confronting disinformation.
2. This platform created a position to digitally interact with people outside their locality.

### **D. Workshop on CDD with Journalists**

Two workshops with the journalists' of English and Bengali newspaper and electronic media were held in Jashore and Mymensingh on June 2021. The workshops were facilitated by Jyoti Chattopadhyay, Coordinator, IED; Rokonuddolah, Senior Journalist of The Daily Sangbad and Amir Muhammad, Senior Reporter, The Daily Ittefaq. Bithika Sarker, Manager of Jashore and Nur Nahar Begum, Manager of Mymensingh Centre were also present.

At the discussion, Mr. Amir Muhammad elaborated an overview of the project and sought journalist's effective participation and role to publish news and views regarding upcoming IED project activities as a whole. Mr. Jyoti Chattopadhyay said, it is our responsibilities to work together to promote good governance. He also urged the journalists and media personnel to take necessary initiatives in this regard.

The outcomes of workshops are as follows:

1. Journalist learned about the fake news verification and awared about a trained TCS team working in their areas to combat digital disinformation.
2. Journalists expressed to take a lead role in the society on the issue.
3. Journalists are willing to write news and articles regarding the existence and risks. They will provide their support towards promotion of good governance.

### **Uniqueness of this project**

Promoting peace, harmony and social cohesion in the community through effectively counter the unbridled digital disinformation against the ideal of a liberal, tolerant, non-communal and democratic state and society.

### **E. Local Level campaign on combating digital disinformation**

800 youths campaigned in social media to build strong social resistance against digital disinformation. Led by 80 TCS members, they did it physically in their areas and social media using digital posters, banners, placards, festoons with various slogans.

They shared these digital contents spontaneously using their own facebook IDs. The contents were, 'Don't click any news without verification; Combat digital disinformation, Prevent online malpractice, Stop hate speech and rumors, Stop fake news'. A variety of posters and video content they shared on their respective walls.

All the contents were created by young TCS members. The benefits of campaign are as follows:

1. They can produce positive digital content.
2. They can explain the process how to spread digital content with an honest objectives.

### **F. Community Level Meeting on combating digital disinformation**

Community people would have to identify digital disinformation and fake news which have become prevalent in the society. Program participants mentioned that these are creating obstacles for free flow of useful information.

IED organized 12 community meetings in Jashore Paurasava and Kashimpur Union and Mymensingh City Corporation and Dapunia Union from June to October 2021. More than 360 community people including social leaders participated.

The attempts of these meetings were to:

1. Facilitate to sensitize community people on combating digital disinformation.
2. Facilitate for having support of community people to TCS members
3. Facilitate to combat digital disinformation by taking support of local government representatives, government officials, civil society members and activists.

The outcome of community meetings are as follows:

1. Community people are now able to explain the risks of disinformation.
2. They are now able to stave off the bad effects of slanders.
3. With the help of TCS members, they are working spontaneously to prevent disinformation in their community.

## **G. Workshop with LEB representatives, Local Administrations and Civil Society members**

Four workshops were held in the working areas on prevention of disinformation and fake news through social media. The workshops in Mymensingh were held at the City Corporation Auditorium and Dapunia DKGS United College auditorium. On the other hand, two workshops in Jashore were held at the Press Club Conference room and Kashimpur High School Conference Hall. These workshops were attended by 160 (40 in each workshop) participants including local administration, local government representatives, teachers, cultural organizers, women leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders and community leaders.

Mr. Refiqul Hasan, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) was the chief guest at the workshop in Jashore Paurasava. Jyoti Chattopadhyay, Coordinator, IED and Qumresh Shahid Hafiz Adnan Riad acted as facilitators for the workshop. Mr. Iqbal Kabir Zahid, Chairman of the Department of Microbiology, Jashore University of Science and Technology, Ahsan Habib, Principal of Jashore Government Women's College, Ekram-ud-Daulah, President of Jashore Sangbadparta Parisad, Veteran Journalist and Freedom Fighter Rukunuddaulah, Zahid Hasan Tukun, President, Jashore and SM Touhidur Rahman, General Secretary, Md. Rajibul Alam, Councilor, Jashore Paurasava, Mahbubur Rahman Majnu, General Secretary, TUC Jashore District Committee; Shoaib Hossain, Acting Headmaster, Jashore Zilla School; Shahinur Rahman, Police Inspector (DB); Joseph Sudhin Mandal, Convener, District Committee, Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Oikya Parishad; Yogesh Dutta, General Secretary, Puja Udjapan parishad, Advocate Kamrun Nahar Kana, Legal Secretary, District Committee, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad participated in the workshop.

In Mymensingh workshop Mr. Ikramul Haque Titu, Mymensingh City Mayor was the chief guest in the workshop; Ayesha Haque, Additional District Magistrate, Mymensingh; Raihanul Islam, Additional Superintendent of Police; Nazrul Islam Chunnu, Convener of Janaudyog; Selima Azad Convener of Women Forum and other local civil society members participated in the workshop.

In Dapunia Union, Mymensingh Mr. Saiful Islam, UNO, Mymensingh Sadar Upazilla was the chief guest in the workshop. Mr. Rezaul Haque, Upazilla Juba Unnyan Officer, Mymensingh Sadar; Sadim Shahajadi, Upazilla Women Affairs Officer; Maksuda Khatun, Upazilla Social Welfare Officer, Salma Akhter, Secretary, Dapunia Union parishad and Mr. Masudul Hasan Arif, Principal, DKGS United College participated in the workshop.

In Kashimpur Union, Jashore Mr. Munir Lingkan, UNO, Jashore Sadar Upazilla was the chief guest in the workshop. Mr. Rukunuddoula, Advisory Editor, The Daily Kalyan, Mr. Nazimuddin, Upazilla Juba Unnyan Officer; Bina Rani Sarker, Upazilla Assistant Education Officer; Mashiar Rahman Sagar, Chairman, Kashimpur Union Parishad; Shariful Hasan, President, Kashimpur Bazar Committee were attended the workshop. Asinur Reza, Program Officer, The Asia Foundation, Bangladesh also attended the workshop.

The participants in the workshops mentioned that it is important to change the mindset to understand and analyze any digital contents and develop capacity to use social media. People of different races, groups, religions, classes and sexes are expecting to improve coexisting healthy and peaceful environment in the community. But unfortunately many cases are happening to affect badly the coexisting environment due to spread of disinformation. As a result, unwanted disputes, conflicts, clashes and casualties are taking place in different places. Know the rules of using social media is not to spread misinformation and resist when necessary, giving importance to society and state. It is important to maintain good governance at all levels. It is the responsibility of all to develop awareness and take active role to prevent misinformation through social media.

### The outcome of workshops:

1. Increased the sense of ownership on combating digital disinformation;
2. Allowing the local civil society members including government officials and LEB representatives to explain the policies pursuing to combat digital disinformation and its risk management on a local stage.
3. Allowing civil society organizations/groups and socially excluded & disadvantaged groups to put their opinions on fake news and disinformation issues;
4. Creating open and transparent mechanisms to track local situation towards the good governance.

### **H. Workshops with students in 4 areas**

Students require to spot disinformation and fake news which have become prevalent in the community. Considering the situation IED organized 4 workshops for the students of local school, college and madrassa and local dropouts in 4 working areas. Total 160 (40 in each workshop) youth attended these workshops.

### Outcomes of the workshops are as follows:

1. The workshop participants have become sensitized on combating digital disinformation and its risk and importance as they have expressed their commitment in the workshops.
2. Students have realized to address and act on analyzing the fake news and they would be alert about the source of any information from social media.

combating digital disinformation and fake news through social media. The workshop in Mymensingh was held at the Borang RTC and Jashore at the RRF TARC.



**Tafsirul Islam Shanto**

Vibrant young TCS member  
Dapunia, Mymensingh, Bangladesh

Received 7 month long exciting and motivational training on the bad effect of digital disinformation in the society. He has been inspired to take part as an active TCS member to combat digital disinformation that hamper the peaceful environment and living together of all sections of people in respective of religion, cast, ethnicity and sex. By his own initiatives he has formed a Disinformation Prevention Forum (DPF) engaging 10 youth in Dapunia Union of Mymensingh District, which is 6 KM from Mymensingh City. The members are maintaining continuous communication among themselves and sharing the social media posts for creating mass sensitization among the people of the community to combat disinformation. People of the community appreciated the actions and activities of this DPF for promoting peace and harmony in this area. Shanto is really a good actor.

## **I. Regional Workshops at District Level**

Two regional workshops were held in Jashore and Mymensingh for 80 TCS members on 40 TCS members attended in each workshop. Local civil society members also joined the program and committed to work together.

The benefits of workshops are as follows:

1. The participants from different fields got opportunity to share their learning among each other.
2. They shared their new ideas with other participants to combat Digital Disinformation.
3. TCS members committed to work with the local civil society members on combating fake news and disinformation together.

## **J. National Workshop on Combating Digital Disinformation (CDD) at CIRDAP, Dhaka**

IED organized a national workshop on combating digital disinformation at CIRDAP, Dhaka on January 5, 2022 with the participation of 20 selected TCS members from Jashore and Mymensingh areas. Mr. Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru, State Minister of Social Welfare was the chief guest in the workshop. About 50 other participants like Government officials, IT experts, Journalists, Professionals, Teachers, Lawyers, Youth, Students and Development activists attended in the workshop.

The participants strongly expressed that the youth of Bangladesh need to identify disinformation and fake news which have become prevalent in the society recently obstructing the free flow of necessary quality information.

At the begining Jyoti Chattopadhyay, Coordinator, IED welcomed all and presented the objectives of the workshop. Dr. Shantanu Majumder, Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Dhaka, made a presentation highlighting project design goal and training activities. During his presentation he mentioned that 'The most prioritized target audience of disinformation is the youth. They are a vulnerable population and it is important for us to make sure they are able to distinguish the difference of the authentic and the fake information'. The impact of disinformation 'is absolutely pervasive' across



the society, he said, adding that this can lead to massive security implications that results the social destabilization.

Replying to a question about what to do when there is an institutional deficiency in providing authentic information, he emphasized that the youth should not feel powerless when it comes to tackling these challenges and that they should take the firm initiative as the nation's future generation of leaders to pin point the problem. He also emphasized the need for learning to discern for identifying genuine news.

Mr. Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru, State minister of Social Welfare attended the workshop as the chief guest. He said, "Fake news and disinformation are a severe deterrence to the progress of any nation, and it can act as a major threat to society if not dealt now. So we need to take some immediate action and obviously, young people can play an important role against digital disinformation." The Honorable Minister said, "During the COVID period a revolutionary progress has been made in our communication sector. We have done a lot of important work online even when we stay in abroad, our communication system was not stopped for a second in the pandemic period." he added.

"Many people are involved in spreading disinformation in social media. In most cases, disinformation spread about religious issues. Everyone must work together to prevent disinformation." the minister added.

Sania Akter, Assistant Professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman University of Science and Technology; Jibonanondo Jayanto, lawyer and activist; Gita Adhikary, socio-economic specialist of Oxfam in Bangladesh; Md Zakaria, Senior Program Manager of The Asia Foundation, Nazmul Ahsan from Action Aid also spoke on the workshop, among others.

IED Executive Director Numan Ahmed Khan presided over the workshop and Tarique Hossain conducted the session.

**The outcomes of the workshop are as follows:**

1. 20 TCS members of 4 working areas got the opportunity to explain about their activities and their learning on that national stage that was highly impressed by all the all the participants and appreciated to continue their efforts.
2. All the participants realized this social movement is necessary to spread across the country.
3. TCS members can lead and facilitate the training on combating digital disinformation in other parts of the country.





**Selina Akhter**  
**Headmaster, Dakatiya Secondary School**  
**Kashimpur Union, Jashore District, Bangladesh**

Selina Akhter participated in a workshop on combating digital disinformation organized by IED at Kashimpur Union along with TCS members and local government representatives, teachers and government officials were also present. Discussion of the workshop deeply touched her mind the bad effects of digital disinformation.

She has been inspired to work to prevent misinformation through social media. She could be an active role player being a headmaster of a high school involving students and other youth in this movement of combating digital disinformation.

She mentioned with an equivocal voice, 'Every day I shall aware many people, not to share any false news without any verification of information, comment in social media without checking and sorting. Be sure about the comments and share beforehand.'

She has organized meeting with community people in her living area Dakatiya in collaboration with IED. She discussed there the danger of online malpractice. She has planned for the training with students and teachers of every school and college in this issue. She realized strong role can be played in the prevention of slanders.



## CHALLENGES

1. It may be difficult to make attachment of youth in this initiative for long time because they may be involved in different jobs and occupations.
2. All kinds of devices like smart phone, laptop, tab and online/internet connection are not available or affordable to youth living in remote areas.
3. Social barriers for women and girls may create less participation of them in this initiative.
4. It is difficult to get good and sustainable result in short period of time.

## LESSONS LEARNED

**Lesson-1:** Youth could play important and active role to promote peace and harmony by ensuring peaceful coexistence of all sections and religions of people by combating digital disinformation. This initiatives are to be extended and continued in different parts of the country.

**Lesson-2:** Women and girls are the most harassed section of the people who are highly victimized through hate speech and online malpractice. Community people, youth and government officials, local government representatives, social leaders, activists should come forward to resist the situation. Combating digital disinformation is one of the strong initiatives by improving the situation to escape and save women and girls.

**Lesson-3:** Mindset change is very essential to create peaceful environment for coexistence of all sections and religions of people.

**Lesson-4:** Long term intervention is needed to bring this kind of changes for promoting peace and harmony.

## CONCLUSION

The project experienced IED to involve youth and civil society members, LEB representatives, Local Administrations, teachers, journalists, community leaders, religious and social leaders has created good achievement and reputation within this short project period. Greater achievement and impact is possible if the project is continued for long time.

# PHOTO GALLERY

## Orienting staff for capacity development



## Sensitizing and engaging youth for combating digital disinformation



## Making TCS members capable to move for combating digital disinformation



## Engaging community people to get involved to combating digital disinformation



Workshop with Journalists



Workshop with school, college, madrassa students and dropouts

## Sensitizing LEB representatives, GoB officials and CS members



## Highlighting combating digital disinformation issue at national level



## Strengthening TCS members efforts for combating digital disinformation



## Fostering campaign to sensitize people on combating digital disinformation



# TCS Members

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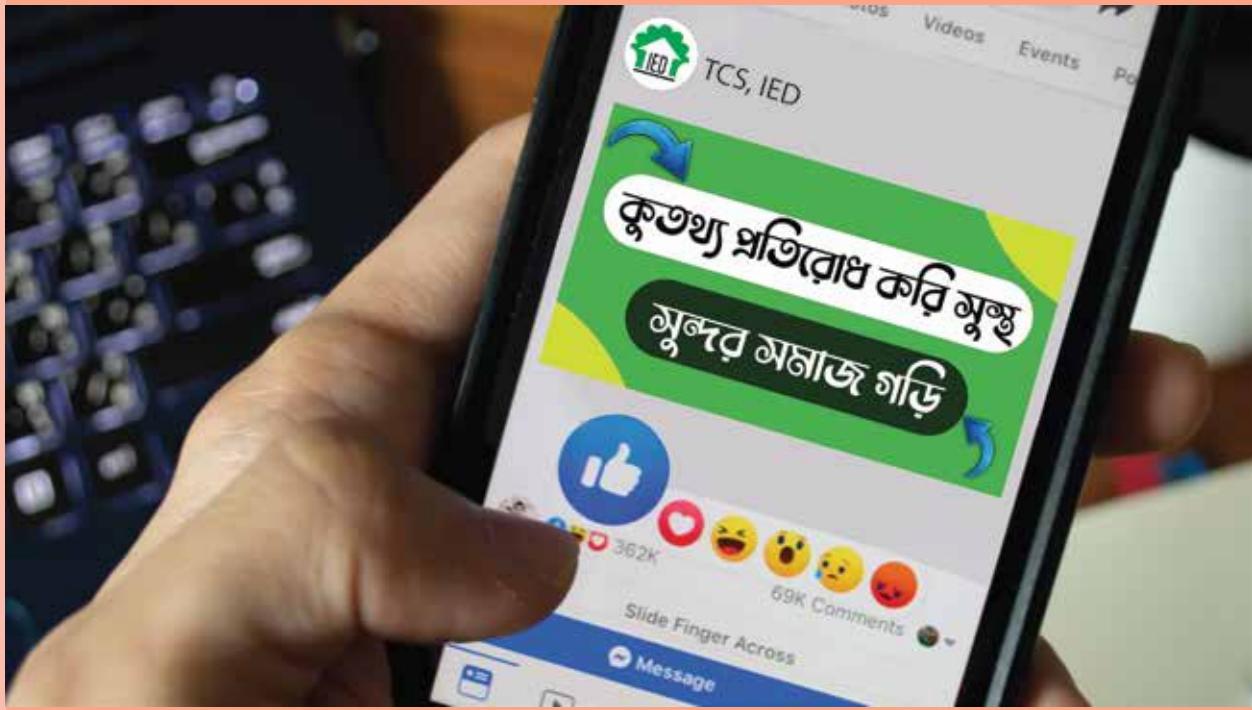
## TCS Members of Mymensingh City Corporation

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14	Lipi Khatun	30	Student	+8801914-976737	N/A
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## TCS Members Posted Online Campaign Contents



## TCS Members Posted Online Campaign Contents



# Booklet

## মানাঞ্জিক যোগাযোগ মাধ্যমে কুতুহ্য প্রতিরোধে প্রথাগত নাগরিক ঘূর্ণনাজের করণায়



ইনসিটিউট ফর এনভায়রনমেন্ট অ্যান্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট (আইইডি)

# Paper Clippings





ANNI BANQUET  
SCHEDULED AT BRO  
ON WEDNESDAY NO

Virginia Garland Taylor  
Executive Director  
Alfré

18 INVIT

Assembly In Charge  
of Language Stud

**“Young people need to identify disinformation, fake news”**

SEIN, 10 February 2021, 10:34: 20/21/2021 2:08:09 2021, 20:20

▲ Staff Reporters

Young members of the Battambang community argue identifying disinformation and fake news which have become prevalent across the country recently obstructing the free flow of quality information, participants said in a national workshop in Phnom Penh on Tuesday.

ICED (Institute for Environment and Development) organised the workshop that was attended by journalists, professionals, teachers, development workers and around 280 youth from Koh Kong and Mymensingh.

“They are a valuable population and it is important for us to make sure they can distinguish between what is authentic and what is fake”, Phnom Penh University Professor Dr. Sisamouth Kavudara, ICED director, said in the workshop-organising digital disinformation held at the CED-UP Institute in Phnom Penh.

The impact of disinformation “is absolutely enormous”, across the society, he said, adding that this can lead to massive security implications and result in social destabilisation.

Replying to a question about what to do when it is an institutional deficiency in providing authentic information, he emphasised that the public should not feel pressurised to fix the problem.

He emphasised the need for learning to detect for identifying fake news.

Social Welfare State Minister Adreah Ali Khan Khun was attending the workshop as the chief guest. He said, “Fake news and disinformation are a severe detriment to the progress of any nation, and it was set as a major threat to society if not dealt with soon. So we need to take some immediate action and obviously, young people can play a special role against digital disinformation.”

## Glimpse of IED

Year of Establishment 1994

Coverage 9 districts

Number of Organized Groups 414 (women 106, women forum 2, community forum 14, Male 20, Adolescents 14, IP 3, Youth and Cultural Forum 2, Youth Group 173, TCS Group 80)

Number of Beneficiaries: Direct 36908, Indirect 653358

Number of Staffs 38 (Female 19, Male 19)

Number of Fellows 8

Volunteer: 492

### Legal status of the Organization

IED is registered with Social Welfare Directorate, Government of Bangladesh, Registration No. Dha- 03553 dated 8 April 1996  
NGO Affairs bureau, GOB vide no 1866, 13 August 2003.

IED is committed to bring social transformation and change of mind set of people through socio-economic, cultural and political changes in the society for the empowerment of the women and minorities (ethnic and religious) and climate change & environmental development

It is giving all its efforts to sensitize people to take active role to transform the lives of women, poor, disadvantaged, marginalized, religious minorities and Indigenous peoples more than two decades. As a development and voluntary organization, IED started its footprint in development sector since 1994. Throughout the period of its journey, the organization understand that development should be focused for even, pro people environment friendly and sustainable. Taking these matters into account, it has considered women, ethnic and religious minorities and environment & climate change issues prioritized agenda for its working strategy.

It has been facilitating to raise voice for poor, women, minority, indigenous peoples, disadvantaged and marginalized section of the society through forming groups & forums, sensitizing local communities, fostering advocacy and campaign, assisting to provide skill training to women and Indigenous youth. It also assists community people to make linkage and liaison with government and non-government service providing institutions to avail services and facilities.

It has taken prominence in the areas of women empowerment, rights of ethnic & religious minorities, human rights, gender equity, good governance, transparency and accountability at local government institutions, civic engagement & awareness, environmental development and address climate change situation. It also gives due emphasis to promotion of social and cultural diversity, strengthen fraternity among ethnicities and different religious groups and to eradicate poverty and minimizing the discrimination & violation against women, indigent, indigenous peoples, and socially excluded groups. It has achieved good reputation and success as mediator among government, policy makers, elected representatives and destitute, women, marginalized sections of the society. It has strong footprint in 9 districts with having offices in Jashore, Mymensingh, Sherpur and Dhaka.

Janoudyog (JU) – peoples' initiatives which is a people centered platform at local to national level is a flagship program of IED. It also makes people aware, mobilize and facilitate to raise voice to claim rights, ensure civic engagement, freedom of expression and dialogue for equal participation of all. It is a unique model through which IED plays catalytic role from back to inspire, sensitize, persuade and mobilize people especially youth, women, community, IPs, students, civil society members, journalists and make advocacy with policy makers, and elected representatives towards issues concerning that affects them at local to national level. Currently JU platform is active in 9 districts across the country.

The organization is governed by its constitution that is guided and managed by 7 members executive committee who are mostly social activists, educationists, researchers, development activists, provide necessary support and cooperation to thrive the organization to next level. It has its own finance manual, HR manual, gender policy, strategic plan for maintaining good governance of the organization. It publishes annual report regularly and conducts evaluation of the projects run by the organization. Executive Committee Board meeting is held regularly on quarterly basis and General Committee meeting is held on yearly basis.

## Organizational Vision Statement, Mission and Development Goals

### Vision Statement

A just, prosperous and democratic society where all the people are living in a healthy and clean environment, access to all health and education services, possessing creative and professional skills, active in cultural participation, transforming conflicts with mutual respect and cooperation, dignity and respect for all, and equal opportunity to enjoy a mental well-being and peace.

### Mission

Promoting community and peoples' initiatives for community wellbeing, livelihood security, gender equality, environmental sustainability, cultural diversity and indigenous rights, conflict resolution and violence prevention, and creative opportunities for all by facilitating community organisations, civil society organisation and advocacy for relevant policies contributing to structural change.

### Core Values

Equality, Freedom, Justice, Cooperation, Peace and, Participation

### Target Group

Poor, women, male, youths, ethnic and religious minorities, underprivileged, disadvantaged and socially marginalized communities.

### Organizational Strategic Objectives

#### Encourage People for Economic, Environment, Gender, Culture and Conflict Transformation Initiatives.

Encourage Peoples Initiatives includes facilitating primary groups, community and civil society organisations. Encourage Janoudyog, the district level CSOs engaged in local development initiatives, social awareness raising and policy advocacy.

#### Enhance Community and Civil Society Capacity on Livelihood, Environment, Gender, Culture and Conflict Transformation.

Enhancement of Community and CSO members' leadership capacity, analytical skills, relevant knowledge and behavioural changes for acting as effective actors of social change.

#### Policy promotion for Economic Wellbeing, Environmental Protection, Gender Justice, Cultural Rights and Conflict Transformation.

Strategically raising specific local cases and at the same time focusing on structural causes of environmental destructions, violation of IP and minority rights, national policy on gender justice and policy issues in addressing social and political conflicts.

#### Strengthening IED's Facilitation Capacity

Knowledge and skills of staffs and volunteers is the key for facilitation of community organisations and CSOs. Increased number of facilitators and researchers recruited and trained.

### Development Goals





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