



Report on
Annual In-Person Meeting with Executive Directors of CSO



“Strengthening the Feminist Movement to Fight Against Violation of Rights”

Organized by: Nice Foundation
Supported by: FON, CREA

Venue: Conference Room of Nice Foundation

Date: 25 February, 2025

Introduction

The day-long In-Person Meeting with Executive Directors (EDs) of CSOs has organized by Nice Foundation with support from CREA. The Meeting was held in the Hall room of the Nice Foundation Head Office, Khulna. There were 12 female and 4 male participants (a total of 16 participants) from CSO and staff of Nice Foundation's FON project including the Project Coordinator present in the meeting. The honorable Executive Director of Nice Foundation, M. Mujibor Rahman, and Rabeya Sultana, Program Director (PD) of Nice Foundation were also present at this meeting.

Description of Meeting

The Meeting began with a warm welcome and greetings from the Program Director of the Nice Foundation, Rabeya Sulnata. Participants also exchanged greetings and introduced themselves. Following that, the honorable Executive Director of the Nice Foundation, M. Mujibur Rahman began the meeting formally with greeted everyone and thanked them for participating in the meeting.

The ED highlighted the overview of the Nice Foundation, it was established in 2005 to alleviate poverty and uplift marginalized communities, especially women by improving livelihoods, securing rights, and promoting gender equality.



Discussion on Nice Foundation and Project Overview

After ED's speech the Program Director of the Nice Foundation, Rabeya Sultana (Focal of the FON project) started with the discussion highlighting the various activities and mission & vision of the Nice Foundation by PowerPoint presentation. Speaking about the Nice Foundation, he discussed the topics of Vision and Mission, Strategic Priorities, Core Values, Program Themes, Geographical Focus, Partnerships and Donors, Key Programs, Research Projects, and Target Beneficiaries of the Nice Foundation.

The PD mentioned that, after being founded in 2005, the Nice Foundation has been playing a crucial role in empowering marginalized communities in Bangladesh, with a special focus on women, religious minorities, Dalit Hindus, and displaced Rohingya. Its mission centers on improving livelihoods, securing rights, and promoting gender equality through programs in human rights, governance, education, health, climate change, and sustainable development. Its strategic priorities include strengthening governance, providing humanitarian aid, advocating for marginalized groups, and supporting local NGOs and CBOs. With a presence in regions such as

Khulna, Jessore, Satkhira, and Cox's Bazar, the foundation works on a variety of programs, including vocational training, education for minority children, and initiatives for climate change adaptation. Through global partnerships with organizations like the Global Fund for Women and Qatar Charity, the foundation not only creates immediate support for vulnerable groups but also advocates for long-term systemic change. Additionally, the foundation's research on livelihood security and climate resilience helps inform policy and deepen the impact of its initiatives.

Discussion on the FON Project

After presenting on the activities of the Nice Foundation, the ED of Nice Foundation discussed about the activities of the FON project, especially the involvement of CSOs in the FON project. He mentioned the following key topics in the PowerPoint presentation:

1. **Project Title:** Strengthening the Feminist Movement to Fight Against Violation of Rights
2. **Project Duration:** September 01, 2024 – February 28, 2026
3. **Location of the Project:** The project is implementing in 20 villages of Batiaghata and Dumuria sub-districts in Khulna district, with additional awareness, sensitization, and advocacy campaigns in 8 other districts of Bangladesh through 10 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).
4. **CSOs Involved:** 1. Manobadhikar Songoskriti Foundation (Dhaka), 2. Bonchita Samaj Kollyan Songstha (Jeshore), 3. Aid Cumilla (Cumilla), 4. WE (Jinaidah), 5. SEBA (Bagerhat), 6. ASSWD (Chalna), 7. SKUS (Cox's Bazar), 8. Prerona (Sathkhira), 9. Dhruva (Khulna), 10. SUVO (Barisal).
5. **Project Overview:** The project focuses on strengthening feminist movements to combat the widespread violation of rights, particularly concerning women and marginalized groups. Key areas of violation include gender-based violence (GBV), discrimination, and economic inequality, which undermine human dignity and perpetuate systemic oppression. The project aims to equip feminist leaders and activists with the tools, networks, and support needed to create lasting social change and ensure women's voices are central in human rights advocacy.
6. **Objectives:**
 - Strengthen the capacity of CSOs, feminist human rights defenders, and community young women leaders to raise their voices for change.
 - Sensitize and capacitate various community groups (women, girls, boys, caregivers) on preventing GBV and establishing gender justice.
 - Facilitate community participation in gender norms, values, and decision-making processes.
 - Enhance collaborative advocacy and movement-building efforts at local, regional, and national levels.

- Build solidarity, capacity, and mobilize resources to strengthen the feminist movement against rights violations.
7. **Beneficiaries:** The project will directly benefit over 11,711 individuals and indirectly impact approximately 45,000 people. The beneficiaries include women, girls, youths, persons with disabilities, transgender individuals, caregivers, parents, teachers, community leaders, and local authorities. These groups will be engaged in awareness-raising, advocacy initiatives, and capacity-building activities.
8. **Key Activities:**
- **Capacity Building Workshops:** Training feminist leaders and activists on human rights, gender justice, and advocacy strategies.
 - **Advocacy Campaigns:** Raise awareness about gender-based violence and women's rights through media outreach and community engagement.
 - **Coalition Building:** Establish partnerships with feminist and human rights organizations to strengthen collective action.
 - **Community Dialogues:** Organize discussions on gender equality, women's empowerment, and fighting rights violations at the community level.
 - **Legal Support Services:** Provide legal aid to women and girls facing GBV and discrimination.
 - **Monitoring and Reporting:** Develop mechanisms to track violations of women's rights and report them to relevant authorities and international platforms.
 - **Leadership Development:** Promote women's leadership at grassroots and policy-making levels.
 - **Safe Spaces:** Establish supportive environments for women and girls to discuss their issues, seek help, and access resources.
9. **Expected Outcomes:**
- Strengthened capacity of CSOs, community young women leaders, and human rights defenders.
 - Increased awareness and action to prevent and reduce GBV and promote gender justice.
 - Improved community participation in gender norms and decision-making processes.
 - Enhanced collaborative advocacy efforts at local, regional, and national levels.
 - A strengthened feminist movement with an empowered network of leaders and organizations advocating for women's and marginalized groups' rights.

Finally, PC of FON project showed a table of work plan for CSO and explained.

Open Discussion

In open discussion session each participant started with their organization's profile and activities. At first, the ED of Bonchita Samaj Kallyan Sangstha (Jessore) introduced herself and her organization to all as a new CSO member. She informed that the Bonchita is a brothel-based sex-worker's organization. It also works for deprived women and children development.

The ED of SHEBA (Bagerhat) said that her organization is working for women development since 1997. SHEBA implemented the project on water and sanitation improvement in Mongla upazila of Bagerhat.

The ED of AID Comilla informed that they worked as a partner organization with other organization and at first, they working as a CSO with the Nice Foundation. They are working in 11 districts of Bangladesh. AID Comilla working for poor people to improve socio-economic conditions through life skill training and education.

The Welfare Efforts (WE, Jhenadah) works on Human rights development. The ED of WE mentioned that her organization as well as she is a person of feminist mentality and she want to see herself as a human rights defender. She said, “WE is a small organization and I think small is beauty.”

The representative of Prerona described about her organization. Prerona works for the marginalized coastal community by focusing on social, environmental, humanitarian issues and advocacy for gender-based violence. It also does for underprivileged people like Transgender, Horizon, Rishi community, etc.

The representative of MSF highlighted the core activities of her organization. She said that MSF works on Human Rights defense against any kind of violence like rape, domestic violence, crossfire, etc. through fact findings, reporting, press relies, etc.

The representative of SKUS mentioned that the significant working area of their organization is vocational training such as sewing, driving, etc., especially for young women. It also works with International NGOs like BRAC, and Plan International on child safeguarding and gender-based violence.

The ED of SUVO said that SUVO has been working since 2012 with the network of Durbar for women's development.

Summary of topic-based discussion

After mentioning the activities briefly of their organization, the participants discussed on following topic.

Implementation and Project Management of the FON Project

The discussion emphasized the importance of effective implementation and project management of the FON (Feminist Opportunities Now) project. Key points included the need for stronger monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure timely delivery of project goals. The EDs stressed the importance of coordination between partners to ensure that resources are used efficiently. There was also a focus on capacity building for local staff to improve project management skills.

Advocacy Strategy

The EDs discussed the need for a more focused and strategic advocacy approach to address key issues facing marginalized communities. Participants agreed on the importance of aligning advocacy efforts with the local context and needs. A collaborative approach with other civil society organizations (CSOs) was emphasized.

Strengthening the Southern Women's Feminist Networks (SoWFeN)

The meeting highlighted the importance of strengthening the Southern Women's Feminist Networks (SoWFeN) to increase women's leadership and voice in the region. EDs discussed the need for capacity building within the network, particularly around leadership development, organizational management, and advocacy. It was agreed that SoWFeN's impact could be amplified by fostering stronger partnerships with regional and global feminist movements, as well as integrating gender-sensitive policies into all programmatic efforts.

Future Collaboration

1. Collaborative Future Planning Strategy

The EDs focused on the need for a collaborative future planning strategy to better align the objectives and actions of CSOs in the region. This would involve regular consultations and strategic planning meetings to ensure that collective goals are clearly defined and that resources are optimally shared. The importance of establishing joint initiatives for mutual benefit was also discussed.

2. Collaborating with Donors

Collaboration with donors was another key topic, with EDs emphasizing the need to strengthen relationships with existing donors and explore new funding opportunities. There was a shared commitment to transparency and accountability in donor relations, with the understanding that aligning donor priorities with CSO objectives would result in more impactful outcomes. Future strategies for donor collaboration would focus on building long-term partnerships.

Conclusion

The meeting concluded with a consensus on the need for greater coordination, more strategic planning, and stronger networks within the civil society sector to drive meaningful change. The importance of advocacy, effective project management, and collaboration with donors and partners was reiterated as essential for addressing the challenges faced by marginalized communities, particularly women.



In-Person Meeting with Executive Director of CSOs; Hall Room of Nice Foundation, 25 February 2025

Report Prepared By

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FON Project
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Annex - 1:

Work Plan for CSO

From 01 September to 28 February 2026

Sl. No.	Budget Code	Activities	Total Number of Activities	Total Participants	Activity Remarks	Total Budget	Budget Remarks
1	4.1.2	Organize Monthly online meetings with the CSO/ CBO and project staff on project progress and implementation plan	18	-	1 Meeting per month with all FON staffs	1800/= (Per meeting 100/=)	2 quarter done
2	4.1.6	Quarterly meeting with Community Young Women Leaders	6	2	2 participants per meeting	2,400/= (Per meeting 400/= or Per person 200/=)	2 quarter done
3	4.2.1	Arrange Monthly Meetings with Women Groups (PWD, Transgender)- 1 group each CS Organization, in each group 30 women.	18	30	1 Meeting per month with 30 participants	2700/= (Per meeting 150/=)	2 quarter done
4	4.2.2	Arrange Monthly Meeting Girls/Adolescents Group (PWD, Transgender) (Girl shine)1 group each CS, in each group 30 Girls.	18	30	1 Meeting per month with 30 participants	2700/= (Per meeting 150/=)	2 quarter done
5	4.2.3	Arrange courtyard sessions to sensitization of Caregivers, PWD, Transgender	4	100	25 Participants in each meeting	3200/= (Per meeting 800/=)	2 quarter done
6	4.3.1	Organize Union level dialogue sessions with men and women on GBV, gender norms, decision-making,	1	15	Session with UP Chairman & Members, Religious leader (Imam, Purohit) etc.	3000/= (Per person 200/=)	Done

Sl. No.	Budget Code	Activities	Total Number of Activities	Total Participants	Activity Remarks	Total Budget	Budget Remarks
		and inclusion					
7	4.3.2	Organize Upazila level dialogue sessions with men and women on GBV, gender norms, decision-making, and inclusion	1	10	Session with Upazila Social Welfare Officer, Youth Development (Jubo Unnayan) Officer, Women Affairs Officer and others.	2000/= (Per person 200/=)	
8	4.3.3	Organize District level dialogue sessions with men and women on GBV, gender norms, decision-making, and inclusion with 25 participants such 8	1	25	A one-hour meeting can be conducted at the Women's Affairs Office or Social Services Office. The meeting participants will include government officials, lawyers, journalists, religious leader, etc.		NF will organize the session with CSO
9	4.4.1	Organize training for Village Group women leaders, women on GBV, gender norms, decision-making, and inclusion	1	3	One day training should be conducted with the Chairman and 2 Members of the village women group.	900/= (Per person 300/=)	Done
10 (4.4.2)	4.4.2	Organize sessions for Men social actors' women on GBV, gender norms, decision-making, and inclusion	1	20	One Meeting with 20 participants	2000/=	Request to suspend this activity for the time being.
11	4.4.4	Arrange International Women's Day, International Girl Child Day, and 16 Days of Activism by Network members	3	45 (Approximately)	16 Days of activism= 1, Women's Day= 1, Girl Child Day= 1 (15 Participants per program)	3000/= (Per program 1000/=)	1000/= has been given and 2000/= is left.

Sl. No.	Budget Code	Activities	Total Number of Activities	Total Participants	Activity Remarks	Total Budget	Budget Remarks
12	4.5.1	Arrange Advocacy dialogues on GBV, Trans and gender justice with LEB, lawyers, law enforcing agencies, professional groups, service providers, journalists	1	20	Dialogues meeting can be conducted at own office premises.	3000/=	
13	4.5.2	Arrange meeting with CBOs/Clubs/religious leaders/progressive social leaders/Grassroots network members to ensure engagement for Systemic Changes	1	20		2500/=	
14	4.5.3	Arrange peaceful mass mourning, candle lights and play card displays journalist engagement for reporting, etc. for awareness raising and public sensitization for support to address violent incidences.	Flexible	100	Participants' coverage= 100	2500/= (Per person 25/=)	
15	4.5.4	Support on individual GBV cases by CSOs from their existing resources.		10	Support to 10 survivors on GBV with referral, information provides, counseling etc.		
16	4.5.5	Prepare and submit issue-based petition		4	Petition submitted with the assistance of Nice Foundation		
17	4.5.7	Referral: Support to victims/survivors by referring to the		1	Support to victim with cash support e.g., court fees,	3000/=	

Sl. No.	Budget Code	Activities	Total Number of Activities	Total Participants	Activity Remarks	Total Budget	Budget Remarks
		service providers			conveyance, first aid etc. (Not hand cash).		

Annex - 2:

Schedule

Time	Content	Facilitator
9:30 A.M – 10:00 A.M	Registration of Participants	Afroz ZAHAN, Project Coordinator, FON Project, Nice Foundation
10:00 A.M – 10:20 A.M	Inauguration session	M Mujibur Rahman, Executive Director, Nice Foundation
10:20 A.M – 10:40 A.M	Tea Break	
10:40 A.M – 11:00 A.M	Discussion on Nice Foundation	Rabeya Sultana, Program Director, Focal of FON Project, Nice Foundation
11:00 A.M – 11:20 A.M	Project Overview of FON Project	Afroz Zahan, Project Coordinator, FON Project, Nice Foundation
11:20 A.M – 2:00 P.M	Open discussion on following Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation and Project Management of the FON Project • Advocacy Strategy • Strengthening the Southern Women’s Feminist Networks (SoWFeN) • Future Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collaborative Future Planning Strategy ➤ Collaborating with Donors 	Rabeya Sultana, Program Director, Focal of FON Project, Nice Foundation
2:00 P.M – 3:00 P.M.	Lunch and closing	