

Communication on Engagement (COE) Report

From

The Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW

October 2, 2016



Institute of Hazrat Mohammad (SAW)

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H.E. Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, NY 10017
USA

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Greetings from the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad (SAW).

I am pleased to confirm that the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW supports the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption. With this commitment, we express our intent to support the Global Compact advancing these principles, and will make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We also pledge to participate in and engage with the UN Global Compact in the following way(s):

1. Promote the UN Global Compact Ten Principles and educate a variety of audiences especially persons with disability about sustainability.
2. Lend capacity to Global Compact Local Networks and/or the UN Global Compact in New York.

We recognize that a key requirement for participation in the Global Compact is the submission of a Communication on Engagement (COE) that describes our organization's efforts to support the implementation of the ten principles and to engage with the Global Compact. We support public accountability and transparency, and therefore commit to report on progress every two years according to the Global Compact COE policy.

Sincerely yours,

Lt. Gen. (Retd.) M Nooruddin Khan, PSC
President



Actions taken by the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad (SAW) in support of UN Global Compact Principles

The Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW is a research think tank committed to peace and human development. A key focus area of the Institute is upholding human rights including rights of persons with disability. Training, research and advocacy are the key areas of its work.

Training

Training for visually impaired on Information Technology, PABX & Call Center, and Spoken English: The Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW is a think tank which focuses on improving the lives of persons with disabilities through different projects. It provides free-of-charge IT training and free access to its IT center/lab for visually impaired persons. The main components of the IT program is to acquaint students to computer screen reading software, speech synthesizers, and self-voicing software, web surfing, using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint with JAWS and DAISY. These lessons are aimed towards helping them gain better access to information and enhance their knowledge and learning. Since 2013, the Institute has started training on PABX and call center operations to help visually impaired persons gain employable skills. Till date the Institute has provided training for over 300 visually impaired individuals since its inception in 2003.



Visually Impaired Students in Institute's Training on Spoken English



Students of Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW in IT class



PABX training session for visually impaired persons at the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW

Research, Awareness & Advocacy

Legal Support for women, minorities and disabled persons: The Institute provides free legal counseling and redress of grievances for the visually impaired and destitute women. The Institute conducts various advocacy programs in order to generate greater awareness on the rights of visually impaired. It also conducts engagement programs such as nationwide essay competition for the visually impaired every year. It also observes international events targeted towards this section of society such as World White Sticks Day and the International Day for Disabled Persons etc. Other activities of the Institute are researches on human rights including right of migrant workers, rights of persons in police custody, means to address human trafficking, climate induced migrants etc.

Outcome of Actions Taken

There are over a million visually impaired persons in Bangladesh. Majority of them have limited access to education let alone ICT based services. The case is much worse for visually impaired women as they are greatly restricted from pursuing training opportunities due to lack of secure transportation arrangements.

Due to lack of education, resources and general awareness, visually impaired women end up leading lives as dependents and often in miserable conditions. The Institute activities enable wider access to ICT and skill based training for one of the most vulnerable and underprivileged sections of our society.

The direct beneficiaries of this project are the visually impaired students in Dhaka currently enrolled in the Institute Training Programs on Computer, PABX and Call Centre and Spoken English Training. We may reiterate that the Institute is committed to upholding the rights of disabled persons and it believes training on employable skills can contribute towards this goal. Its training, legal support and advocacy programs have delivered the following results:

Created access to information: 87 visually impaired students received training on IT from the Institute during the period July 2014 to July 2016. This training has enabled them to use computer and browse the internet, thereby opening doors for information and communication.

Created access to opportunity: the students are specially taught on how to browse for public and private sector job opportunities.

Empowered: Moreover the fact that the trainees know how to operate and use a computer has equipped them with an indispensable skill which is of great relevance for getting a job.

Awareness & Advocacy: The Institute has **conducted six awareness session** for the visually students during the period July 2014 to July 2016. In these sessions the Institute informed the students on basic human right as stated in the International Bill of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, Citizen's Rights under the Laws of Bangladesh, and the special rights granted to them due to disability. Discrimination can arise in variety of work-related activities. These include access to employment, to particular occupations, promotions and to training and vocational guidance. The session participants are informed on what to expect and what may constitute discrimination in recruitment, remuneration, hours of work, performance assessment and advancement, training opportunities and occupational health, safety and office environment.



Class on Disability Rights at the Institute premises taken by Barrister Rizwana Yusuf, Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

The Institute also details on the issue of discrimination in the workplace and where discrimination is identified, develop grievance procedures to address complaints, handle appeals and provide recourse for employees. They are informed on how employees with disabilities may have particular needs that should be met, where reasonable, in order to ensure that they have the same opportunities (e.g. for training and advancement) as their peers. Women are also given special sessions on workplace harassment, domestic violence and how they may stand up for their rights in the event of a breach. Moreover, we have conducted two disability awareness session and one disability awareness interview that was televised nationally. The awareness and advocacy program are organized by Barrister Rizwana Yusuf, Director Administration and

Barrister Reazul Karim, Director Legal Affairs and Barrister Seema Iqbal, Course Tutor of the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW. The sessions also included relevant external guest speaker. The then National Human Rights Commissioner Prof. Dr. Mizanur Rahman has been a guest speaker on a few occasions.



Prof. Dr. Mizanur Rahman, National Human Rights Commissioner handing over a certificate to a visually impaired participant. H. E. Mr. Iwan Wiranata-atmadja, Ambassador of Indonesia, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) M. Nooruddin Khan, President of the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW, Prof. Dr. Jalal Ahmed, Director, National Institute of Ophthalmology & Hospital, and H. E. Mr. Nguyen Quang Thuc, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam also seen in the picture.



From Left to Right, Ms. Lauren Lovelace, Director, The American Centre Dhaka and Ms. Sonia Panni, President SAARC Women's Association Ms. Rokeya Haider, Managing Editor, Bangla Service at Voice of America and Barrister Rizwana Yusuf, Director Administration are seen at a discussion session entitled Empowering Women: Transforming Disabilities to Abilities, organized at the Institute premises.



Seminars on Human Rights organized by the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW



National Human Rights Commissioner Prof. Dr. Mizanur Rahman speaking at a seminar organized for the visually impaired persons of the Institute.

Establishment of Human Rights: the Institute's activities for visually impaired persons are fully devoted towards upholding and ensuring human rights. The training program of the Institute of Hazrat Mohammad SAW is committed towards improving lives of one of the most vulnerable groups in our society i.e. visually impaired persons by contributing towards their future economic livelihoods. The training, research and advocacy programs make important contribution to sustainable development in addition to establishing and upholding human rights.