Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) won the UNESCO Confucius Literacy Prize 2013 for its outstanding contribution in Ganokendra (People’s Centre) based literacy integrated with livelihood skills training of rural adults and out-of-school youths, especially women and girls for literacies of the 21st century.

DAM also developed various forms of innovative materials for non-formal and formal education systems and in building capacity of teachers, field functionaries and Ganokendra members. Dhaka Ahsania Mission was nominated by the Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU) for the UNESCO Confucius Literacy Prize 2013 and finally awarded by UNESCO. Mr. Kazi Rafiqul Alam, President of Dhaka Ahsania Mission received the UNESCO Confucius Literacy Prize 2013 from Ms. Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France on 9 September 2013 in a ceremony on International Literacy Day.

The prize consists of a silver medal, a diploma and a cheque of US$20,000. The prize is reward for more than three decades of persistent efforts of Dhaka Ahsania Mission in the area of literacy, NFE, continuing and lifelong education in Bangladesh. In facts, Dhaka Ahsania Mission has been implementing various types of educational projects in more than 28 districts of Bangladesh for intensive Literacy and Non-formal education programmes and other development support services. The award is an inspiration to the organization and its dedicated staff to continue their hard work in promoting education in Bangladesh. In all areas, DAM’s programme is deliberately designed in favour of women and adolescent girls for their empowerment.

Ganokendra is to organize people with common cause, facilitate a mutual learning environment, create a fearless space for expressing/generating opinion, develop analytical skills and plan for action steps, mobilize community for raising voice and actions, institutionalize the systems as independent community based organization that brings people of a community together, enabling them to access public and private services. DAM had been in assisting Ganokendras, gradually widened for improving living standard of grassroots accessible to all through addressing development needs of the communities and platform for building solidarity of disadvantaged people, and providing job oriented skills training, community capacity building initiatives for claiming rights and entitlement, a forum for learning-action-reflection-action.
Orientation course on management of classroom library

Dhaka Ahsania Mission and Plan Bangladesh jointly organised an orientation course on management of classroom library at Sreepur in Gazipur district.

Held in three batches on July 16, 17 and 21 respectively, the orientation course was participated by 67 participants. Of them, 19 were male headmasters, eight female headmasters, one male assistant teacher, two female assistant teachers, five male para teachers, 23 female para teachers and nine male SMCs.

Md Saiful Islam, project manager of QPE Project, inaugurated the orientation course. Md Saidul Haque, project coordinator, Gazipur programme unit of Plan Bangladesh, delivered the welcome address where he narrated the benefits of library. Upazila education officer and five assistant upazila education officers were present at the orientation course. In her address, upazila education officer Zakia Parveen said, “Learners can increase their power of creativity and imaginative power by reading other books alongside textbooks.” “Activities of the library will be supervised by members of the ministry of education headed by the headmaster of every school.”

Successful management of classroom library by learners, their reading habit is created, skill of library management is increased and help motivate others to read books.

Melandaha UNO distributes money, nets for fish cultivation

Melandaha upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Sazia Zaman recently distributed money for fish feed and nets among the beneficiaries of Cross-Border Transfer of Agriculture Technology, Organisational and Bazaar Development Project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission at the Melandaha upazila office of DAM. The objective of the project is to improve the standard of living of people. Upazila fisheries officer Md Ali Akbar, chairman of Charbanchipakuria, Durmut, Nayanagar UPs, area coordinator of DAM Melandaha Md Monwar Hossain and other officials were present. DAM distributed one set of net and Tk 4,200 in cash for each beneficiary of the project. There are 103 beneficiaries in Melandaha upazila.

Funded by the EU, DAM has been implementing the Cross-Border Transfer of Agriculture Technology project. Activities of the Project are being supervised by Concern Universal Bangladesh while Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation-Bangladesh has been providing technical support to the project.

World Breastfeeding Week celebrated at Keshobpur

World Breastfeeding Week, an annual world event, was celebrated in Keshobpur upazila town under Jessore district on August 01, 2013. Breastfeeding Support: Close to Mothers was the theme for this year’s World Breastfeeding Week which highlighted the importance of providing support to breastfeeding families.

Keshobpur Upazila Health Department and Health and Empowerment project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission jointly organised a colourful procession and a discussion to mark the occasion. Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Md Abdus Samad led the procession while Keshobpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abu Sayed Md Manjur Alam was present at the discussion as chief guest. The procession originated from in front of Keshobpur Upazila Health Complex. It paraded the main streets of Keshobpur bazaar and terminated in front of the health complex.

This was followed by a discussion at the meeting room of the health complex. DAM Area Coordinator Md Alamgir Hossain and Upazila Coordinator of Spring Bangladesh Md Mahmudul Haque discussed about the importance and benefits of breastfeeding in presence of a large number of mothers. Upazila Family Planning Officer Md Dildar Hossain participated in the discussion as special guest.
Representatives of donor agency European Union (EU) observed the activities of Cross-Border Transfer of Agricultural Technology project in two upazilas of Jamalpur district on August 25-16, 2013. They saw the project activities at Dudhiagachha and Dakatia beel under Adarbhita union of Motherganj upazila and Uzanka area of Laxmipur union in Jamalpur Sadar upazila. The team leaders included Tim Benny, consultant, EU Bangladesh delegation, Enet Witvin, sector chief, livelihood and food security, Concern Universal, Dr Nazmunnahar, programme manager (livelihood), Nets Bangladesh, Md Murad Khan Wahid, marketing advisor, Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation-Jamalpur, Md Sadequr Rahman, project manager, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Jamalpur, Avijit Saha, assistant project manager, Concern Universal Bangladesh, Md Mazharul Islam, LSP Advisor, Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation-Jamalpur, Md Quamrul Hossain, advisor, LSP and Market Development, Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation-Jamalpur and Arabind Roy, technology transfer co-ordinator, DAM, Jamalpur. Concerned area coordinators, deputy area coordinators and staffers of various strata of cross border project, DAM, were also present. The visitors talked to the members of primary team and local service providers. Funded by the EU, DAM has been implementing the Cross-Border Transfer of Agriculture Technology project consisting of 15,000 beneficiaries in 29 unions five upazilas of Jamalpur district. Project activities are being supervised by Concern Universal Bangladesh while Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation-Bangladesh has been providing technical support to the project.

Jamalpur Deputy Commissioner Md Delwar Haider recently distributed chickens among 56 beneficiaries of Cross-Border Transfer of Agriculture Technology, Organisational and Bazaar Development Project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission in Ranagachha union. The DC distributed 14 chickens and two cocks to each of the beneficiaries. Jamalpur Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Lutfunnahar, Zila Nirbahi Magistrate, Cross Border Project Manager Sadekur Rahman, Advisor of Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation-Bangladesh Murad Khan Wahid, Majharul Islam, Ranagachha union Chairman Lutfar Kabir Akand, members of different wards, Area Coordinator Md Darul Huda Mandol and officials and staff of DAM were present.
International Literacy Day observed

Like every year this year also International Literacy Day was observed in various projects of Dhaka Ahsania Mission on September 08, 2013.

UNIQUE-2 project
UNIQUE-2 project and local administration jointly chalked out various programmes to mark the day in 44 areas of six districts. Upazila Nirbahi Officer, upazila chairman, local representatives, elite, CLC/pre-school learners, CAG/CMC and LRC members, tutors, NGO representatives, teachers and students of different schools, guardians and patronisers of education took part in the events. A total of 48,857 participants spontaneously took part in the programmes in Dhaka, Mymensingh, Barisal, Khulna, Rangpur and Rangamati districts. Of them, 25,058 were women and 23,799 men. Programmes included rally, discussion, drawing contest, signature campaign, hand writing competition, telling ‘No to Illiteracy’ by raising hands upward, cultural meet, prize distribution ceremony and through distribution of sweets.

View exchange meeting in Barguna

A view exchange meeting was held at Badarkhali Union Parishad in Badarkhali Union Parishad presided over. At the outset of the meeting, Md Joyanal Abedin, technical officer of ECDSB-Project, delivered the welcome address. He narrated in brief the activities of DAM. He highlighted various activities of the project, names of partner organisations and beneficiaries of the project etc. He also spoke on the objectives of the project and its different activities.

A training course on gender equity for pre-childhood development was organized for UP members and Standing Committee members at the meeting room of Badarkhali Union Parishad in Sadar upazila of Barguna district on September 12, 2013. Badarkhali UP chairperson Md Shahjahan Mia presided over. Things to be done for elimination of gender discrimination needed for children’s pre-childhood development was discussed during the training course. Funded by Aga Khan Foundation and CIDA, the project was implemented by Dhaka Ahsania Mission. The objectives of the project were overall child development, child rights, gender equity and elimination of gender discrimination.
From page 4

International Literacy

ACCESS (Health & Empowerment) Project
Sharishabari upazila administration and Dhaka Ahsania Mission jointly observed International Literacy Day on September 08, 2013. A colourful procession and roadside rally were organized to mark the occasion at 10:00am. Besides, discussions were held at Pogoldigha, Doail, Aona and Pingna unions at the initiative of four community resource centres.

At upazila level, procession and roadside rally were organised. The procession was jointly led by upazila Parishad Chairman Md Abdul Malek, Vice Chairman Tohura Latif and Education Officer Faizunnessa Begum. ACCESS (Health & Empowerment) Project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, district administration and Non-Formal Education Bureau jointly organized a rally and discussion in Jessore to mark the day. Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Jagoron Chakra Foundation, Shishu Niloy Foundation, RRF and various service-providing organisations collaborated in holding the rally and discussion.

This was followed by a discussion that was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education & ICT) Md Zahid Hossain Ponir. Deputy Commissioner Md Mostafizur Rahman was present as chief guest at the discussion. District Primary Education Officer Subrata Kumar Banik, Assistant Director of Non-Formal Education Bureau, Jessore, Assistant Commissioners (Education) and officials of various government and non-government organisations were present. At the outset, the Assistant Director of Non-Formal Education Bureau, Jessore, delivered the welcome address.

To mark the Day, ACCESS (Health & Empowerment) project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission chalked out befitting programme at Pattibila Alor Pathay Community Resource Centre, Moyezuddin Hamid jointly led the rally. This was followed by a discussion at Moheshpur Pilot School that was presided over by the UNO. The Upazila Chairman was present there as chief guest. Dhaka Ahsania Mission Area Coordinator Quamruzzaman attended as special guest. A total of 1,000 participants took part. Participants included teachers and students of various schools, colleges and madrasas, members of Ganokendra, journalists and upazila level officials. Dhaka Ahsania Mission organised different programmes at Parashmoni Ganokendra at Jogihuda village in Fatehpur union to mark the occasion. Programmes included discussion, bringing out wall magazine from Ganokendra contributed by the semi-literates, painting competition, sports and games meet and cultural function being participated by semi-literate women members of Ganokendra and prize distribution ceremony.

ACCESS-CAFOD
Officials and workers of various projects of Dhaka Ahsania Mission in Barguna district and representatives of Ganokendro/CRC ad MCRC took part in a colourful procession and discussion. The procession paraded different streets of the district town and terminated at the Shilpakala Academy. Among others, Advocate Dhirendra Debnath Shambhu, a lawmaker elected from Barguna-1 constituency, Barguna Deputy Commissioner Md Abdul Wahab Bhuian, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Mohammad Ali, Barguna Sadar Upazila Chairman Lt Col (retd) A Khaileque participated in the rally. This was followed by a discussion at Zilla Shilpakala Academy where importance and significance of the Day were discussed. Barguna DC Md Abdul Wahab Bhuian presided over while Barguna District Education Officer placed a report on the situation of literacy in Bangladesh. ‘Sabai Habo Sakkhor Aar Dakkho, Ekush Satakey Ei Amader Lokkho’ (All of us will be literates and competent, this is our determination in the 21st century). With this aim in view, ACCESS-CAFOD-II project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission observed the Day in 86 Ganokendro (people’s centres), five CRCs/MCRCs of Sadar upazila and two CRCs/MCRCs and 20 Ganokendro ofAmtoli upazila in Barguna district. Rally and discussion were held at Ganokendro and CRC level. Discussion and rally were also held at Keshobpur at the initiative of the project.

East ALOKON
Like every year this year also East ALOKON and East UCLC projects observed the the Literacy Day. Various programmes were chalked out to mark the occasion. Programmes included rally, drawing competition and discussion. Children, adolescents, guardians, CRC members and local elite took part in the rally. A rally paraded the streets in Mirpur-10 area and another rally paraded around Osmani auditorium. This was followed by a discussion and a drawing competition. A total of 60 participants took part. Finally, prizes were distributed among the winners.

QPE
To mark the occasion, rally, art competition, drama, recitation of rhyme, debate competition, essay writing contest and prize distribution ceremony were held in Jaldhaka upazila of Nilphamari district. It is worth mentioning, UNESCO on November 17, 1965, declared September 08 as the International Literacy Day. In Bangladesh, the Day is being celebrated regularly from 1972.
DAM at work

From page 1
DAM wins UNESCO Confucius

people’s empowerment.
The main target groups of
Ganokendra are 15+ age group
out-of-school youths, adult
women and girls have covered
hard-to-reach poverty stricken
areas. The innovative aspects
of Ganokendra, it is organized
and run by the community, its
post-literacy learning support
is not time-bound, addresses
learning and socio-economic
development needs of the
communities, it is accessible to
and forge a head to achieve a
sustainable development. In
fact, the Gonokendras serve as
hubs of all activities that are
linked to empowerment of the
disadvantaged people of the
community; it is not only
DAM that provides its services
through these Gonokendras
but the establishments are also
used by other NGOs to extend
their services to the commu-
nity people. DAM’s all inter-
vention undertaken at the

their newly acquired literacy
skills through gaining access to
relevant materials; it is here
that the out-of-school youths,
people with limited reading
skills, local school students
and adolescents access the li-
brary, read newspapers, books,
magazine, wall magazine,
journals and play games; it is
here that people acquire their
livelihood skills to get inte-
grated in economic main-
stream and it is the center
which serves as platform for
training. Center information
sharing and issue-based dis-

cussion, support/ linkage for
income generating activities,
socio-economic and environ-
mental programmes of various
agencies linked towards peo-
ple’s empowerment.

As recognition of DAM’s con-
tribution in the field of educa-
tion, DAM received the
Independence Award in 2002
which is the highest national
award of Bangladesh. At the
International level DAM re-
cieved prestigious award “In-
ternational Literacy
Prize-2003” awarded by UN-
ESCO and “ISESCO Literacy
Prize-2012”. Other significant
awards for contribution in the
development sectors include
AGFUND international
Award-2004 for pioneering de-
velopment project on environ-

cultural reformer, Khan Bahadur
Ahsanullah (RA) founded
Dhaka Ahsania Mission in
1958 with the motto of “Di-
vine and Humanitarian Serv-
ice”. The founding aim of

all people in the area, managed
by the elected management
committee with back-up sup-
port of DAM in collaboration
with community. DAM con-
centrated on empowering the
poor through education, insti-
tution building and awareness
raising followed by enhancing
their technical productive
skills through education and
practical training comple-
mented by livelihood support
so that they can become pro-
ductive members of their fam-
ilies, earn income to improve
their quality of life, and eventu-
ally break out of the poverty
trap.

DAM’s focus has been to ig-
nite the minds of the poor tar-
get beneficiaries and create
conditions so that they can un-
leash their latent social energy
grassroots level is centered on
the “Gonokendras”. Once the
Gonokendras became opera-
tional an apex body of Ganok-
endras called “Community
Resource Centre (CRC)” was
formed at the Union level with
representation from the com-
munity level Gonokendras to
coordinate the activities at the
broader community level and
build solidarity to address big-
ger development issues within
the union, raise people’s voice
and advocate at the higher
level.

This is where community peo-
ples congregate to discuss eco-
nomic and social issues for
collective social actions; where
neo-literates, particularly ado-
lescents, youths and adults, es-
pecially women and girls, come to sharpen and upgrade
cussion, support/ linkage for
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DAM is ‘social and spiritual
development of entire human
community’ which is the guid-
ing principle of all DAM activ-
ities. DAM is now one of the
leading Non-Government De-
velopment Organizations in
Bangladesh working with peo-
ple for last 55 years providing
multi-dimensional develop-
ment support services to the
disadvantaged and poor people
both in the rural and urban set-
goons and their newly acquired literacy
skills through gaining access to
relevant materials; it is here
that the out-of-school youths,
people with limited reading
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and adolescents access the li-
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sharing and issue-based dis-

Rajkumar Sadhukhan, Deputy Director,
Dhaka Ahsania Mission
Ganokendra, a grassroots organization

Ganokendra is a grassroots organization. It is being managed by its members. Member consists of disadvantaged and backward rural people. Ganokendra is now recognized as a people’s organization. Rural people from all walks of life visit the people’s centre regularly. Specially, it is a favorite organization of poor people. All of them meet here to tell stories, discuss problems, identify issues, find out a solution, take decisions and resolve those untidily. They dream about their future advancement.

People organize themselves at Ganokendra. They act together and resolve their problems. They protest untidily if they find any injustice or disorder. This is why; Ganokendra has been turned into a strong people’s organization for sustainable development through social, economic and cultural activities.

Ganokendra as people’s organization, Multi grade teaching learning approaches, Package service for trafficking and violence victims, Disaster friendly WatSan approaches, CMDRR, Social Use of ICT, Access approach to empowerment, Food and livelihood security for ultra poor.

In order to develop a social and spiritual life of the entire human community, DAM works with basic thrust on poverty alleviation and socio-economic empowerment of the poor, specially the disadvantaged. Strategically, in consideration of priority, DAM divides its development intervention into four basic sectors- Education, Health, Livelihood and Human Rights and Social Justice.

Ganokendra is an institution developed and promoted by Dhaka Ahsania Mission as a most promising and formidable community development center with a wide variety of programs and interventions to respond to the varied requirement of the community people of all ages irrespective of social and economic status. In most cases the poor and the disadvantaged are the members of the preferred target groups. Ganokendra are solely community managed but they run with technical support from the local offices of DAM particularly in the initial stage. With the increase of number of Ganokendras because of their popularity and wide acceptance. It gradually became difficult for DAM to provide immediate and continues support to Ganokendras at times of their individual need. In this situation DAM went on to set up a Community Resource Centre (CRC) in every union for taking care of the Ganokendra of the union in respect of their empowerment and proper functioning. CRC have been designed and developed in such a way that they are capable of providing meaningful and effective technical, social, economic and human development support to the requirement of individual Ganokendras targets at the total development of union as a whole and whose territory it is located.

In order to provide a structured post-literacy programme, in 1992. DAM initiated Ganokendra as post literacy centers. Initially the Ganokendra were established for literacy purposes only. Now the Ganokendra functions as a community learning center. Most sustainability concern under this program are sustainability of the process of education towards empowerment and the process of community management of the Ganokendra for realizing people’s rights to access to public services. To ensure immediate and continued support to the Ganokendra at times of individual needs and to organize a union base network for combined voice of the community people for interaction with the local government level, DAM facilitated organizing CRC. CRC is the network of Ganokendra that have been involved over the years as people’s organization. Ganokendra is a community based organization used as a platform of community learning centre, a center where poor and marginalized people get together to discuss about their problems and decides action steps to resolve those.
UNESCO Confucius Literacy Prize 2013 Awarding Ceremony in Paris