



# Brattyajan Resource Centre (BRC)

## Dedicated to the Marginalized and Excluded Communities

**Brattyajan** is a Bengali word (*Brattaya* meaning devotee + *jan* meaning people) that well defines the excluded and marginalized groups and communities of Bangladesh. From ancient times (Vedic age), the word means people who are devout, honest, simple and peace-loving. When we get close to the indigenous communities and all other marginalized and excluded groups we see they are simple, honest, religious, devout, craftsmen and peace-loving. However, they have fallen behind and they are generally poorer than others, facing human rights abuses and do not get respect they deserve, largely because of their simplicity, honesty, humbleness, minority status, ethnic identities, casteism, occupations considered to be low and lower level of education than the majority community. They are generally considered ‘others’ by the majority community, pushed to the edge and it is hard for them to migrate out of their current status.

Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)

Partner Organisation: Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC)

Development Partners: Caritas France and MISEREOR



Marginalized and excluded communities including the indigenous peoples constitute a significant percentage in the hugely Bengali-majority Bangladesh, a country of 165 million people. Those excluded, socially and economically, and discriminated against, for their identity, captive situation, occupations, casteism, culture, geographical locations, and various other reasons, come from among both religious and ethnic minorities and the majority communities. Many of them live on the fringes of the country, deprived of equal opportunities and facing wide-ranging social, economic and political disadvantages.

It is true that Bangladesh has made commendable achievements in addressing the challenges of poverty, which has declined to 20.5% in 2018-19 and extreme poverty, which has declined to 10.5% during the same period (Poverty and Extreme Poverty Rate of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2018-19). But the size of poor and extreme poor is still quite large (around 40 million people). The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact increasing the poor and extreme poor. Poverty, therefore, remains to be a huge challenge for the society, the state, and the development actors. Such level of impoverishment and also disadvantages and marginalisation that are multi-dimensional realities, can somewhat be linked to exclusion and political alienation.

The marginalized and excluded among the citizens of Bangladesh include different occupational communities who are victims of casteism, ethnic or indigenous groups, tea plantation workers and their communities, Bede (gypsy), Bihari, sex workers, transgender (Hijra), Kaiputra or Kawra (a pig-rearing community), Jaladas (a seafaring fishing community living in the coasts of Cox's Bazar and Chattogram), disabled and other smaller excluded groups. These communities remain largely excluded and marginalized because they do not equally enjoy their legitimate rights as citizens. They face triple challenges of poverty, vulnerability and exclusion in terms of leading normal life, secure jobs and income, resources, access to loans, housing, education, skills, cultural capital, welfare state, citizenship and equal rights in the eyes of law, democratic participation, human treatment and dignity.

Given that the number of poor and extreme poor is still large, continued anti-poverty efforts are essential. In attention to the poor and extreme poor, what is not adequately attended can be called poverty's third frontier—excluded and marginalized communities that the applicants have worked with for the past two decades. SEHD and PPRC (applicants) scaled up their attention to these communities and extensively studied them for nearly seven and half years with support from the European Union and ICCO Cooperation. Many of these communities are considered social outcasts or untouchables facing ill-treatment and deprivation of opportunities that are instrumental for the poor and ultra-poor to migrate out of poverty. As a result, they progressively fall behind in the run for development.





Addressing this third frontier of poverty, viz., exclusion and marginalisation, requires a multi-pronged approach as championed by SEHD, PPRC and partners. The multi-year research and consultations pursued by these organizations over the preceding years have underscored the critical need for making the excluded groups statistically visible through credible research as an essential first step and clearly mapping their issues and agenda to scale up policy and programmatic attention. It is indeed with this objective in mind that SEHD and PPRC have taken lead in initiating Brattyajan Resource Centre (BRC) with a great number of research outputs in hand from the past projects supported by the European Union and ICCO cooperation in particular.

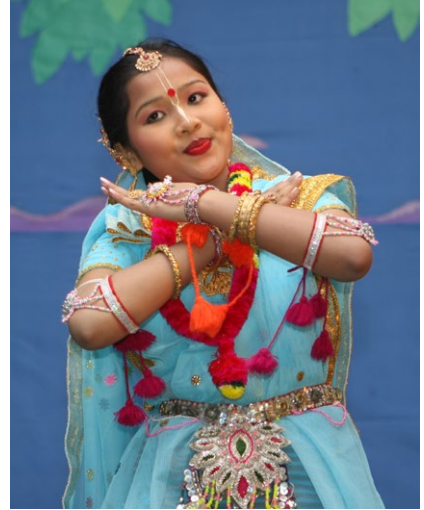
Brattyajan Resource Centre (BRC) has been initiated through the project, “Promoting human rights of marginalized groups in Bangladesh through Brattyajan Resource Centre” funded by MISEREOR and Caritas France that are committed to promoting social justice, human rights and sound environment.

There are hundreds of government and non-government organizations that provide services to the marginalized and excluded communities. Yet, many of these groups remain invisible because of dearth of information. SEHD and PPRC will run BRC through formulation of research-based group- and issue-specific agenda and training to enhance capacity and life skills. The ultimate goal of BRC is to contribute concretely to the protection of the marginalized and excluded communities and work unitedly with all stakeholders to assist them become equal and dignified citizens of the country.

## Final Beneficiary groups of BRC

**a) Ethnic communities (Adivasi):** According to the latest official list (last updated in a gazette on Khudra Nri-gosthi Sangskritik Pratisthan Ain 2010, on 23 March 2019), the number of ethnic communities stand at 50 (11 in the CHT and 39 in the plains). The 11 ethnic communities that inhabit the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) are Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Lushai, Bawm, Pangkho [also spelled as Pangkhua or Pangkhu], Mro, Khumi, Chak, Khyang and Tangchangya. Ethnic communities on the official list (outside the CHT) are: Bormon, Dalu, Garo, Hajong, Khasi, Koch, Kol, Monipuri, Munda, Oraon, Pahari/Malpahari (Paharia), Rakhine, Santal, Bagdi/Bakti, Banai, Baraik/Boraik, Bhumij, Ganju, Gorait, Hodi, Kondo (only in tea gardens), Kora, Lohar (only in tea gardens), Mahali/Mahle, Mahato/Kurmi Mahato/Bedia Mahato, Malo/Ghashi Malo, Mushohor, Patro, Rajwar, Shabor, Teli, Turi, Gurkha, Bedia, Ho, Bhil and Kharwar/Kherwar. These plains land ethic communities (outside the tea gardens and CHT) are concentrated in 16 districts in the Northwest, seven districts in the north-centre and two districts in the northeast.

According to SEHD research findings there are a good number of small ethnic groups in the plains not included in the government list. These groups are: Bhuiya, Bindumondol, Buna, Chowhan, Ghatual/Ghatuar, Hajra, Hari, Kadar, Kairi, Kalwar, Karmokar, Koda, Modok, Noonia, Pal (also known as Kumar), Rajbhar, Rajbongshi, Robidas, and Tanti. Besides, there is a community that identified itself as Kshatriya. There are strong evidences that a third of 142,098 Kshatriya families that live in nine districts in the northwest are Koch. The government estimate of the population on the official list would be below two million while SEHD estimates them at around 2.5 millions.





**b) Tea workers and their communities:** There are 158 tea gardens in Bangladesh (excluding those in Panchagarh where tea cultivation started only recently). The majority of 138,366 tea plantation workers and their total population of around half a million are non-Bengali. The British companies brought them from Bihar, Madras, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and other places in India to work in the tea gardens in Sylhet region. The misfortune of these indentured labourers started with their journey to the tea gardens. Deprived, exploited and alienated, the majority of the tea workers live an inferior life.

What is unique about the tea workers and their communities is that their occupation and alienation from the Bengali majority give them a common identity as tea workers. But the reality is that they belong to many ethnic and caste identities—as many as 80—as has been mapped by Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD). (See the table for the list of these communities). These communities speak 13 languages and represent diverse culture. The languages spoken in the tea garden areas include Santali, Munda, Garo or Mandi, Rajbongshi, Oraon or Kurukh, Mahali, Sadri, Bishnupria Monipuri, Mandraji, Bhojpuri, Nepali, Saura or Soura, Jongli and Khasi.

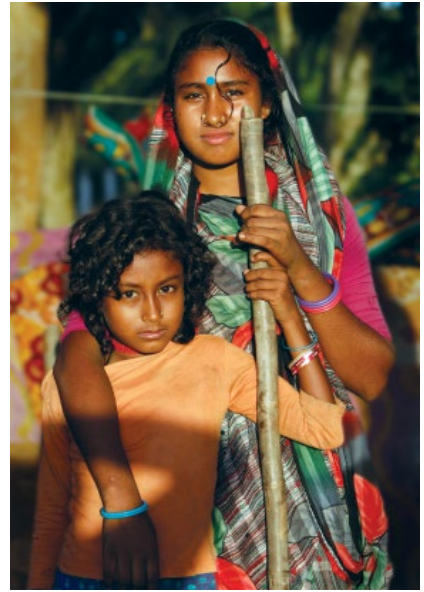
**c) Harijan:** Harijan is an occupational group or community. They are traditionally known as sweepers and many of them consider themselves as social outcasts or 'Dalit'. The term, 'Dalit' is used to define the status of those who are outside the four varnas, which means they belong to the so-called fifth category in the Hindu casteism. They are untouchables even to the Shudras. They are the most neglected in society and they are the most deprived of all social privileges. The members of the Harijan community work as cleaners in the cities and pourashavas (municipalities) all over the country except for three districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). Like the tea workers, the members



of the Harijan communities were brought to what is now Bangladesh from India's Odisha, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh regions during the British colonial period. Cleaning has been their main occupation for more than 200 years now. The Harijans with a population of around 100,000 are one of the most marginal communities who are afflicted with a variety of social and economic problems.

**d) Bede:** The Bede is a Muslim gypsy (floating) community of Bangladesh. They travel from one place to another to earn a living for 10 to 11 months of the year and gather in 75 locations of the country to meet their families and other community members for one to two months. Many Bede leaders estimate their population in Bangladesh at around 500,000 and around 5,000 caravans (groups) of Bede move from one place to another. The Bedes in general are very poor and the rate of literacy among them is very low as well. Most of them are landless and many live on *khas* (public) land and in tents. They hardly have access to healthcare services and other government benefits including Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs).

**e) Sex workers and transgender:** The sex workers are foremost among the social outcasts in Bangladesh and socially most marginal community cut off from social relations. A survey that SEHD carried out in 2018 found 3,721 female sex workers (FSWs) working in 11 brothels. However, the total number of FSWs is much bigger in the country—around 93,000. According to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Government of Bangladesh (2016) of these FSWs, 36,593 are based in the streets, 36,539 in residences and 15,960 in hotels. There is also an estimated 119,869 MSM (men who have sex with men) including transgender (TG)/Hijra (approximately 10,000). In a survey of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Save the Children, and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) Bangladesh (2016) a large percentage of





the TG/hijra (77.7%) identified themselves as sex workers. The Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD) of 2017-2018 reveals that 73.33% of the respondents had been sold or dragged into this occupation by touts or intermediaries (*dalal*), 24.44% entered voluntarily and only 2.22% were born in the brothels. The same survey finds that 94.07% of the respondents have faced various kinds of torture such as rape, gang rape, abduction, and physical torture of various types.



**f) Kaiputra (pig rearing community):** Also known as Kawra, this community with a guesstimated population of 12,000 are despised in the society because they rear pigs, an animal ‘filthy’ to the Muslim majority. To most other people in society, they are considered untouchables. The Kaiputras, belonging to Hindu religion, live mostly in southwestern districts of Jashore, Satkhira and Khulna. SEHD carried out a detailed survey on the Kaiputra in 2017-2018. The survey finds that living in 41 southwestern villages, these people are engaged in traditional occupation, i.e. rearing pigs in the open fields. There are another 29 villages with Kaiputra concentration but they changed their occupation and stopped rearing pigs in the open. Such villages in Satkhira have turned into fishing villages. Because the neighbours neglect the Kaiputra, they try to hide their identity.



**g) Jaladas:** Occupationally marginalized and suffering from a degree of social untouchability, Jaladas are a traditional fisherfolk community—mainly seafaring but also engaged in riverine fishing in the coastal districts of Chattogram and Cox’s Bazar districts. This fisherfolk community lives along the coastline in around 60 spots from Teknaf in the southern Cox’s Bazar district to Mirsarai in northern Chattogram district with an approximate population of 150,000. Life and livelihoods of the Jaladas people are directly influenced by natural calamities. The children of the Jaladas families hardly



give importance to education. Therefore, education is low among the Jaladas. Debt and landlessness are high among the Jaladas community.

**h) Rishi:** Historically the Rishis of Bengal are cobblers, leather workers and instrumentalists for generations. They are identified as Muchi, Chamar and Charmokar. These words are derogatory to the Rishis. In Bengali language, the words Muchi, Chamar and Charmokar mean the persons engaged in preparing hides and making and repairing shoes. The people of this ‘untouchable’ community mostly live in India’s Uttar Pradesh, Maddhya Pradesh and Bihar regions. They are one of the repressed or ‘Dalit’ communities among the Hindus in India. Currently, the Rishi people live in almost every district of Bangladesh. Their number is, however, higher in Jashore, Satkhira, Khulna and Bagerhat districts. Parittran, a rights-based organization of the Rishis in Bangladesh, Rishi population in the Khulna division alone is around 186,797. Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), with assistance and guidance of SEHD and Parittran, carried out a research in 53 paras (clusters) or villages in Satkhira, Jashore, Khulna and Bagerhat districts of Khulna division and found 51,745 Rishis in 9,088 families.

**i) Bihari:** Approximately 300,000 Urdu-speaking Biharis live in 70 camps in 13 districts of Bangladesh. Of these camps 28 are located in Dhaka. The Indian state of Bihar is the original home of most of the Biharis in Bangladesh. During the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, these Biharis migrated to the then East Pakistan (presently Bangladesh). The Biharis sided with Pakistan during Bangladesh’s liberation war in 1971. After the war, a portion of them went to Pakistan and the rest remained stranded in Bangladesh. The High Court of Bangladesh, in a 2008 judgement, gave a ruling in favour of giving citizenship to around 150,000 Biharis who were minors in 1971 or



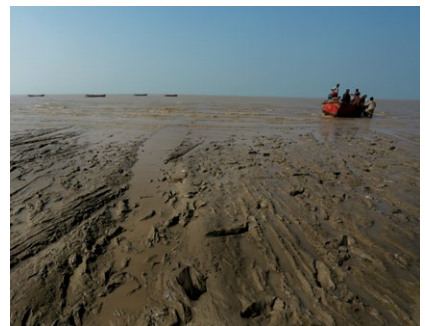


born afterwards. However, they still live inferior lives in the camps without a permanent address and basic facilities. They are continuously deprived of most of their political, economic, social, and cultural rights.

Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), in partnership with SEHD, carried out a study [in 2017] covering 30 well-known Bihari camps. It found a population of 265,531 in these camps. Most of these camps were in Dhaka and 156,250 Biharis were found in 10 camps in Dhaka. Illiteracy is very high among the Biharis in camps, sanitation is very poor, and most do not own land and most are burdened with loans. Their access to Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) is also low.

**j) Other excluded and special communities:**

There are a number of smaller groups found among both Muslims and Hindus who are considered to be outcasts. These groups are: Teli (oil presser), Napit (barber), Dhopa (washer-man), Tanti (weavers from Pakistan who speak Urdu), Darjee (tailor), Hajam (unqualified doctors for circumcision), Majhi/Khottra (boatmen), Behara (carrier of bridal carriage), Kasai (butcher), and so on. Some of these groups such as Teli, Napit, Dhopa, Tati, Dorjee, and Hijra are also found among the Hindus.



**‘The state religion of the Republic is Islam, but the State shall ensure equal status and equal right in the practice of the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Other religions.’**

**‘The state language of the Republic is Bangla.’**

**‘The State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities.’**

**—The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh**

## Excluded and marginalized communities at a glance

Categories	Groups or Communities	Population	
		Government Statistics 2011	Other Sources (2010)
Marginalized in terms of casteism and occupations that are despised	Harijan (sweepers), Rishi, Jaladas (fishers who venture the deep sea and coastal rivers), Kaiputra (or Kawra who raise pigs in herds in the open particularly in marshland), Teli, Napit (barber), Dhopa, Tanti (Urdu-speaking weavers from Pakistan), Dorjee (tailor), Hajam (unrecognised physicians who engage in Muslim circumcision), Majhi or Khotra, Behara (those who carry palanquin), Kasai, etc.	No data available	1,300,000 (approximate)
Ahmadiyya Jamaat		Not available	100,000
Ethnic groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)	Bawm, Chakma, Chak, Khumi, Khyang, Lushai, Marma, Mro, Pangkho or Pangkhua, Tripura and Tanchangya	845,141	851,016 (according to C, S and other sources), 973,846 (M)
Small ethnic communities of the plains land (government list)	Official list before 19 March 2019: Bormon, Dalu, Garo, Hajong, Khasi, Koch, Kol, Monipuri, Munda, Oraon, Pahari/ Malpahari (Paharia), Rakhine and Santal.	740,600 (Government estimate of population before Gazette of 19 March 2019)	889,819 (According to C, S and M)
	Added to the official list (as seen in the list of 19 March 2019): Bagdi/Bakti, Banai, Baraik/Boraik, Bedia, Bhil Bhuimali, Bhumij, Ganju, Gorait, Gurkha, Ho, Hodi, Kharia (only tea gardens), Kharwar/ Kherwar, Kondo (only in tea gardens), Kora, Lohar (only in tea gardens), Mahali/Mahle, Mahato/ Kurmi Mahato/Bedia Mahato, Malo/Ghashi Malo, Mushohor, Patro, Rajwar, Shabor, Teli and Turi.	123,752 (SEHD estimate excluding the communities living in tea gardens; so far there is no government enumeration on these communities)	SEHD estimate of population of plains land ethnic communities on the government list before 19 March 2019: 766,067 (C, S and M)



<p>Small ethnic communities of the plains land and outside the tea gardens (SEHD finds, yet to be accommodated in the official list).</p>	<p>Bhuiya, Bindumondol, Buna, Chowhan, Ghatual/Ghatuar, Hajra, Hari, Kadar, Kairi, Kalwar, Karmokar, Koda, Modok, Noonia, Pal (also known as Kumar), Rajbhar, Rajbongshi, Robidas, Tanti, and Lyngam (a group among the Khasi)</p> <p>Kshatriya (There is a strong indication that one-third of around 650,000 Kshatriyas in nine districts in the Northwest—Bogura, Lalmonirhat, Panchagarh, Nilphamari, Thakurgaon, Kurigram, Joypurhat, Dinajpur and Sirajganj—are Koch.</p>		<p>258,776 (SEHD estimate excluding the families of these communities living in the tea gardens)</p> <p>625,000 (SEHD survey)</p>
<p>Small ethnic groups in the tea gardens. (Of these communities 23 are included in the official list and 16 of them are found in the plains and two in the CHT). The 16 Communities found in the plains are: Bagdi/Bakti, Baraik/Boraik, Bhumij, Garo, Ganju, Gorait, Kol, Kora, Kurmi, Mahle/Mahali, Munda, Mushohor, Oraon, Rajwar, Santal and Teli. The two communities from CHT found in tea gardens are Marma and Tripura.</p>	<p>Almik, Bagdi/Bakti, Baraik/Boraik, Barma, Bashphor, Bauri, Been, Bhar, Bhokta, Bhuiya, Bhumij, Bihari, Bunerjee, Chasha, Chatri, Dusad, Garo, Ghatuar, Giri, Goala, Ganju, Gorait, Goswami, Gour, Goyashur (They are also known as Ashur), Hajra, Jhora, Kahar, Kairi, Kalindi, Kalwar, Kanu, Karmokar, Keot, Kharia, Khodal, Kol, Kondo, Kora, Kumar, Kurmi, Lohar, Mandraji, Mahle/Mahali, Majhi, Mal, Marma, Monipuri, Mridha, Munda, Mushohor, Naidu, Nayek, Nepali, Noonia, Oraon (also spelt Orang), Painka, Pashi, Jainta Patro, Phulmali, Pandit, Pradhan, Rajballobh, Rajbhar, Rajbongshi, Rajgor, Rajwar, Rautia, Reli, Robidas, Sadhu, Santal, Shabor, Sheel, Suklaboiddyo, Shobdokar, Tanti, Teli (also known as Pal), Tongla, Tripura, Patro (also outside of tea gardens) and Shobdokar (also outside tea gardens)</p>		<p>472,125</p> <p>According to Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB) report (2019). The BTB estimate included enumeration includes 5,500 households of Bengali workers.</p>

Communities that are deprived of privileges and excluded and invisible due to variety of reasons such as occupation, culture, geographic locations and eviction from the land	Bihari		300,000 (estimated)
	Bede	75,702 (Department of Social Services Estimate)	500,000 (self-estimate of the Bede)
	Female sex workers	92,572*	
	Transgender (Hijra)	8,533*	
	People with disability		1,600,000 (registered)
	Inhabitants of chars (river islands)		Above 4,000,000
	Bawali		300,000
	Rohingya	1,100,000	900,000
	Kamar (blacksmiths), kumar/potters), Napit (hairdresser/barber), makers of cane and bamboo produces, brassware producers and cobblers (shoe makers)—these communities are treated as marginalised communities by the Department of Social Services.**	No census data available	Potter: 151,598 Blacksmith: 138,193 Makers of cane and bamboo produces: 332,992, Napit: 330,484, Shoe maker: 160,785 Brassware producers: 10,519, Source: Administrative data of BBS, 2016.

Notes:

C—Estimate of the respective communities.

M—Counting by Mohammad Rafi (Rafi, Mohammad, July 2006, *Small Ethnic Communities of Bangladesh: A Mapping Exercise*, Panjeree Publications).

S—Estimated population based on a survey on socio-economic conditions of the ethnic communities such as Khumi (2014), Chak (2010), Khasi (2007) and Dalu (2014) by Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD).

\* National AIDS/STD Programme, Directorate General of Health Services, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Save the Children. 27 June 2016. *Mapping Study and Size Estimation of Key Population in Bangladesh or HIV Programs 2015-16*.

\*\* Administrative data of BBS, 2016.



## **The project locations**

The entire country in one sense because the final beneficiary groups are spread around throughout the country. However, the locations with concentration of the final beneficiary groups are: North-centre of Bangladesh (Tangail and Mymensingh districts with concentration of Garos and other smaller ethnic communities), Northwestern districts (16 districts with concentration of the plains land ethnic communities), Northeastern districts (with concentration of tea communities and few other plains land ethnic communities), Dhaka, Faridpur, Mymensingh, Tangail, Khulna and Bagerhat districts (with concentration of sex workers), Southwestern districts (with concentration of Rishi/Dalits and Kaiputra or pig rearing communities), and the Chittagong Hill Tracts (with concentration of hill indigenous communities). The Harijans and Bede are found in all districts of the country except for three hill districts. The Biharis are concentrated in 13 districts with their main concentration in Dhaka.

## **Goal of BRC**

It is for interventions through BRC that the marginalized and excluded communities including the indigenous peoples are better protected and become equal and dignified citizens of the country.

## **Objectives of the Initial Project of BRC**

1. BRC brings the final beneficiary groups to work together in building group-specific agenda and strategies to claim their legitimate rights.
2. The targets of BRC widely use knowledge resources and tools developed and improved to maximize their social protection by increasing access to the state-funded Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs).
3. The BRC targets and stakeholders develop skills to replicate methodologies to generate knowledge resources and use them.

## **Expected Outcomes of the Initial Project of BRC**

1. Community and group-specific agenda and toolkits developed and further strengthened are made available for use of human rights defenders and community leaders to link ground realities with policy discussions.
2. The excluded and marginal groups, social outcasts and ethnic communities will have eye level exchanges among themselves and other targets and thus scaling up their respect

and dignity.

3. Partnerships and networks in different clusters of the final beneficiaries are given support and their capacity to deal with their issues and concerns significantly scaled up.
4. The outputs of the project activities will develop intellectual clarity among the targets and give them a voice to speak out for their rights and social protection and explore solutions with information, baselines and evidences in hand.
5. Policy and state functionaries have better understanding of the problems and needs of marginalized and excluded communities through availability of evidence-based publications and policy dialogue.
6. Solid foundations are built to concretely establish the BRC and its sustainability as a resource centre for the excluded and marginalised groups.

## Key Activities of the Initial Project

**a) Research, investigation, survey and analysis:** The key activities of BRC and the project include but not limited to are research, investigation, survey and analysis. Areas of research and investigation are condition and difficulties these communities face and their participation in social safety net programmes. Specific areas of attention in the initial years of BRC are as follows:

- **Research-based group-specific and issue centric agenda building:** The people of the excluded and marginalized communities become victims of deprivation, inequality and human rights abuses. Besides structural social injustice and violence pose serious concerns. Now with a large number of knowledge resources (common and specific to communities) in hand, the ethnic communities of the plains, tea communities, Bede, Harijans, Jaladas, sex workers, Kaiputra (pig rearing community), Rishi, and Bihari will develop their respective community agenda. Two areas of issue-centric agenda are land rights and forests and commons and identity, state recognition and discrimination elimination. Investigations into human rights abuses among these communities and reports out of these investigations will be contributed to national newspapers media throughout the project period. An investigative film on challenges of social protection of select excluded communities will also be made.
- **Study of Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) and social safety net programmes (SSNPs) and access situation of the marginalized communities in these state-financed programmes:** The marginalized communities do not have enough knowledge about SSNPs. On the other hand, the state agencies that deal with inclusion of these communities into SSNPs do not always have enough information on inclusion and exclusion errors into SSNPs. Along with review of SSPs and SSNPs, a study



and analysis will be carried out to generate information on inclusion and exclusion errors and challenges of the marginalized and excluded communities in accessing SSNPs.

- A study will be carried out to develop strategy to concretely establish BRC. A partner directory will also be developed to present a clear map of the CBOs, CSOs, cultural groups, state agencies, international NGOs, donors, missionary organizations, human rights organizations, academic and research organizations and alliances that are active within the targets and final beneficiaries of BRC.

**b. Building repository on the excluded and marginalized groups:** Most of the excluded and marginalized groups and their organizations have participated in research, survey and production of publications and documentary films in which SEHD has taken lead. During the past one decade at least 25 books and monographs and numerous catalogues, posters, newsletters, brochures, keynote papers, manuals (four) and documentary films (six) have been published and produced and shared with state and non-state organizations and actors who work with the excluded and marginalized communities. A central repository of all these materials and those produced by others will be developed under BRC to serve the excluded and marginalized communities and other actors who work with them or take interest in them. In addition, BRC will assist the community based organizations (CBOs) in building community or group-specific repository in their offices, clubs, schools and colleges in their areas.

**c. Training and workshop to develop skills and capacity:** Organizing trainings and workshops will be a key activity to scale skills and capacity of representatives of the final beneficiary groups, cultural activists, journalists, CBOs and CSOs working with the marginalized communities and human rights and development workers. The key objectives of organizing training and workshop are to enhance skills of investigation, research and analysis, intellectual clarity, organizational capacity and protection of languages and culture of the marginalized groups who speak different languages and have rich cultural traditions.

**d. Convention, festival and dialogues:** A convention and festival associated with dialogue, cultural programme and photography exhibition will be organized in 2024. The outputs of research and investigations will be shared in the convention which will be helpful in achieving the objectives and results of the project. Discussions will build on community and issue centric agenda. Eminent economists, researchers, officials of local and national administrations, elected representatives and journalists will be involved. Interactions among wide-ranging people will be useful in understanding difficulties that the marginalized communities face and exploring solutions. Integral part of the conventions will be cultural performances by different cultural groups already organized. In addition dialogues will be organized among the targets and final beneficiary groups on Labour Day (1 May), International Women's day (8 March), 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence and International Day of Rural Women (15 October).

**e. Assistance to access justice:** BRC does not have a legal aid programme, but it connects the victims of human rights abuses with organizations (government and non-government) that provide legal aid to the poor and marginalized. The largest of the legal aid programmes in Bangladesh is run by BRAC. The leading government organization providing legal aid to the poor is National Legal Aid Services Organization (NLASO), fully functional since 2009. Both government and non-government legal aid organizations have limits and coordination is a serious issue. On the one hand, BRC will scale up its efforts to connect the marginalized communities with legal aid organizations and on the other, it will examine the areas of improvement in providing legal aid services and explore the possibility of facilitating coordination among legal aid entities.

**f. Small grant support to CBOs and cultural groups:** Small grant support will be provided to eight CBOs . They will utilize these small grants for organizing cultural groups, writing research papers on languages and cultures and developing community-based repositories making the community participation meaningful.

**g. Publications and productions and documentary film:** Information and data generated from research, survey, investigations and analysis will be published in community- and issue-based agenda, books, strategy papers, monographs, reports posters, brochures, leaflet and newsletters. Besides, a documentary film will be made on the condition and marginality of one or more communities. The final beneficiary groups, researchers, journalists, human rights defenders, state and non-state actors and others will have easy access to all these knowledge resources and refresh their ideas and insights about challenges of marginalized and excluded groups in Bangladesh.

**h. Collaboration, solidarity and partnerships:** BRC will establish collaboration and interface with concerned state actors (ministries and agencies) particularly those that administer the Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) and generate data (BBS in particular), international organizations, and national bodies that promote culture and heritages. Besides, solidarity networks will be established among different final beneficiary groups and targets.

## Methodology

What is special of the project and BRC is participation of all in the research and other activities. SEHD, the lead organization, partner PPRC, employees of the project, the focal points selected from among the beneficiary communities, the final beneficiary groups and their CBOs and the targets will implement the activities together. The key objectives of the project are protection of the marginalized and excluded communities of Bangladesh through research, investigation, survey and analysis; scaling up their capacity and skills; scaling up inclusion of the marginalized communities in the state-financed opportunities; and increasing their representation and participation in socio-economic and political arena.

SEHD and PPRC are experienced in investigation and research. Those participating in research will also be trained. At the same time expertise of other professional researchers and universities will be outsourced and utilized. The program director and research and resource advisor will lead monitoring and evaluation with the help of the project staff for proper implementation of research and investigations. Professional statisticians will join the team for analysis of data. The program director, research and resource advisor and other officials will utilize their professional expertise in editing and publishing the information and data generated.

Led by the program director and research and resource advisor, the project officials, leaders of the final beneficiaries and specialists will conduct workshops, consultations dialogues and convention. Government officials, officials of local government, elected representatives, professional researchers, journalists, university teachers, human rights defenders and representatives of final beneficiaries will be on the panel of trainers.

SEHD has expertise and skills in investigative reporting, documentary film making



and organizing photography exhibitions. The project officials will engage in production of publications and other materials under supervision of the program director. Writers, translators and designers will be outsourced when needed.

**Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD):** Established in 1993, SEHD is a non-profit Bangladeshi organization. Two major areas of its work are human rights and environment. Both areas are very vast. In addition to research on overall situation of human rights and environment, it has been engaging in qualitative and quantitative research, investigation, reporting, documentation and life skills and capacity building training of the marginalized communities in specific areas. It has conducted significant research and investigation on forest, forest destruction, industrial pollution, ethnic communities, tea communities, Kaiputra (pig rearing community), Harijan, Bede, sex workers and other marginalized communities and has published more than 70 books, monographs, numerous investigative reports and nine survey reports. Besides, SEHD has produced 12 documentary films. SEHD is also known for its information services. SEHD's ultimate goal is to develop intellectual clarity and strengthen consciousness of people.

**Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC):** Since its inception, PPRC has been at the forefront of research and policy advocacy on poverty, social protection, land, inclusive growth, governance, local governance, political development, quality, basic education



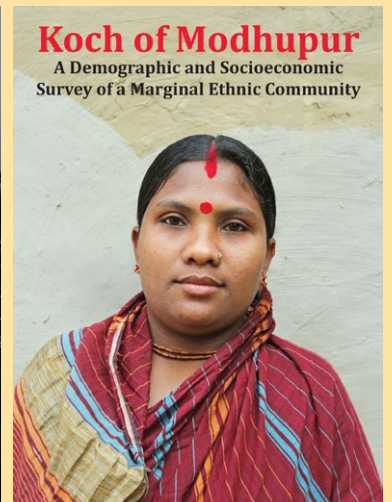
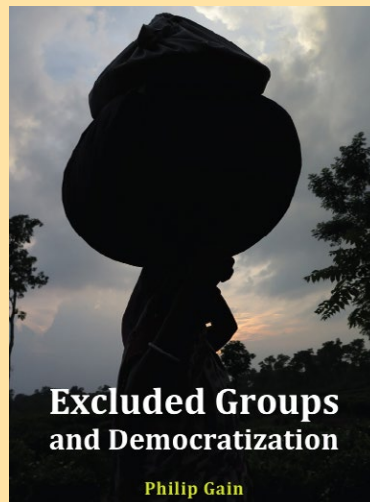
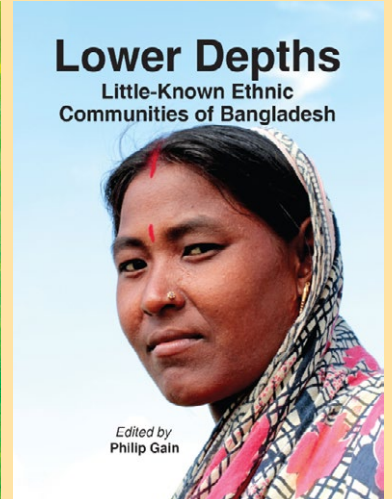
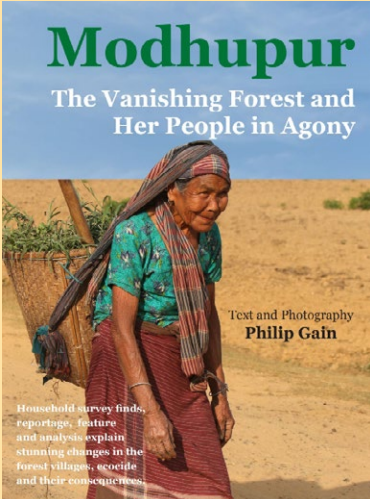
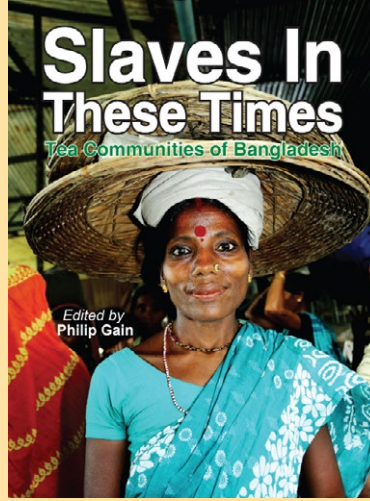
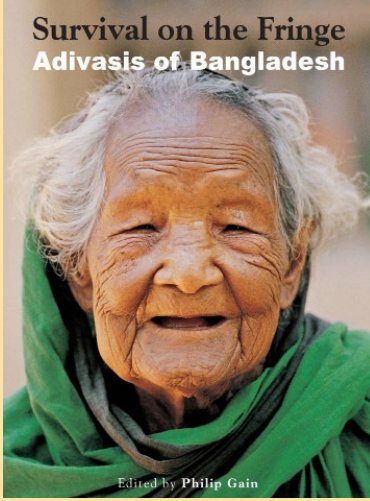
and sustainable urbanization. Its core themes reflect current and emerging priorities of Bangladesh. The Centre maintains a strong interest in regional and international discourses on democracy and development. Activities of the Centre encompass policy research, project evaluations, quality statistics, discourse promotion, policy advocacy, grassroots and policy networking, and rapid response initiatives on issues of national urgency.

Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD) has had a longstanding relationship with Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), a think tank and policy research centre. Under the framework of an EU grant, SEHD and PPRC carried out extensive research and mapping on the challenges faced by excluded groups, their everyday realities and strategic recommendations to increase their representation to promote inclusiveness and pluralism in society. A combination of research, investigation, dissemination of knowledge products, sharing skills and efforts to promote participation and representation of the socially excluded groups of Bangladesh is applied to effectively map the communities and focus on their specific predicaments and requirements. PPRC and SEHD are also part of the Healthy Bangladesh SRHR Network launched to promote social and policy accountability on women and adolescent health.

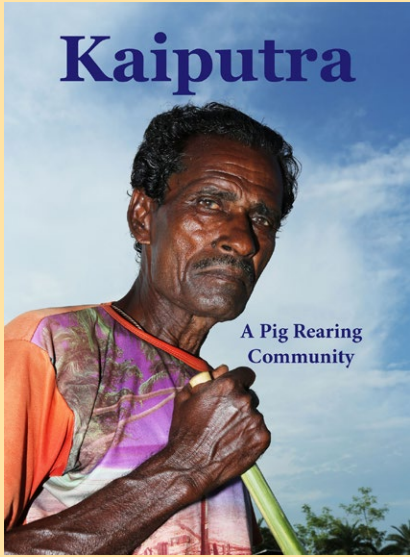
**Other related targets:** CBOs and trade union rooted in the marginalized communities, Development workers, human rights defenders, elected leaders, CSOs, concerned state agencies and officials and the media.

**Working Committee:** A 25-member working committee with representatives from tea workers, ethnic communities, Rishi, sex workers, transgender, Bede, Harijan, Kaiputra, Bihari, and Jaladas communities has been created to guide Brattyajan Resource Centre (BRC). The working committee advises and guide on timely and efficient implementation of the resource centre. It is also mandated to set up sub-committees and a high-level advisory body. The initial working committee members are Jayenshahi Adibashi Development Parishad and Achik Michik Society (AMS) active among Garos and Koch of Modhupur in Tangail district; Jatyio Adivasi Parishad (JAP), based in Northwest and an umbrella body of ethnic communities in this region; Moulvibazar Cha Jangoshthi Adivasi Front (MCJAF), based in the tea gardens; Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union (BCSU), the lone union of the tea workers; Sex Workers' Network (SWN), a network of 29 organizations run by former sex workers and working for sex workers; Mukta Mohila Samiti (MMS) based in Goalanda, Rajbari and working with the sex workers of the biggest brothel of the country; Gram Bikash Kendra (GBK), a Dinajpur based organization paying attention to the ethnic communities of the North-eastern region; Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB), a development NGO, paying attention to the ethnic communities; Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC), an organization of the Biharis; PARITTRAN, an organization of the Rishis in South-western districts; and Bangladesh Horijan Yokkho Parishad (BHYP), the country-wide organization of the Harijans, Caritas Bangladesh, a national NGO paying great attention to the ethnic communities and many other marginalized communities; and Protik Theatre, the leading cultural front of the tea communities based in Hobiganj.

# ব্রাত্যজন বিষয়ক নির্বাচিত প্রকাশনা

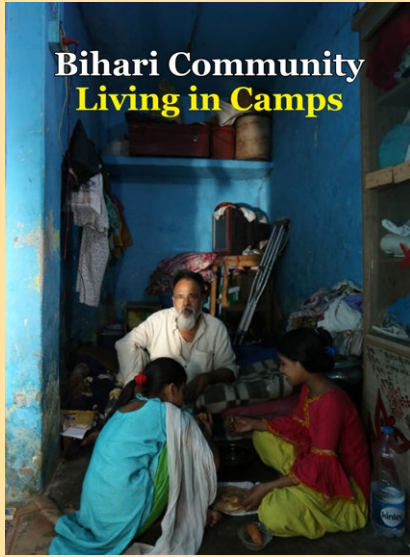




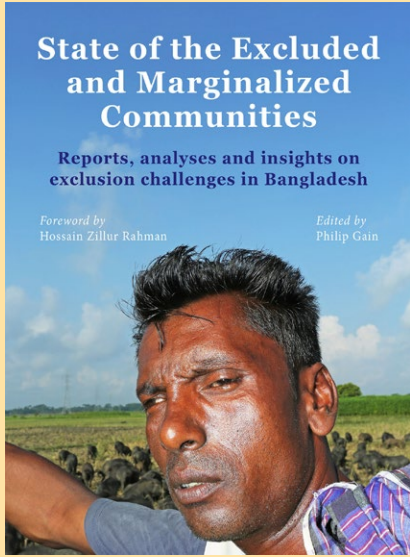


# Kaiputra

A Pig Rearing Community



# Bihari Community Living in Camps



# State of the Excluded and Marginalized Communities

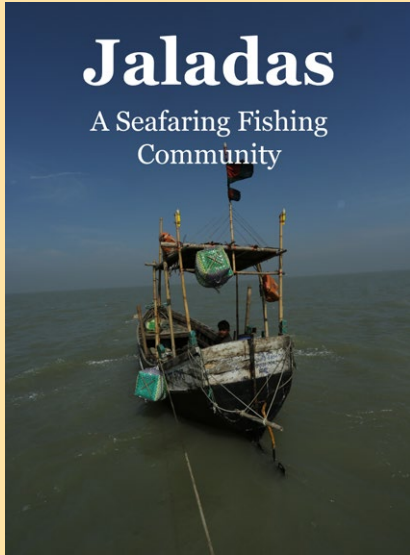
Reports, analyses and insights on exclusion challenges in Bangladesh

Foreword by Hossain Zillur Rahman

Edited by Philip Gain



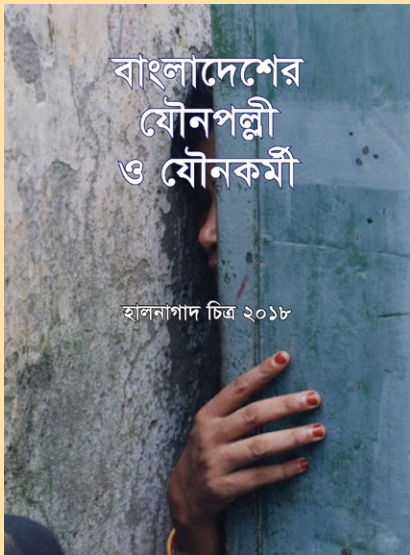
# Rishis of Khulna



# Jaladas A Seafaring Fishing Community

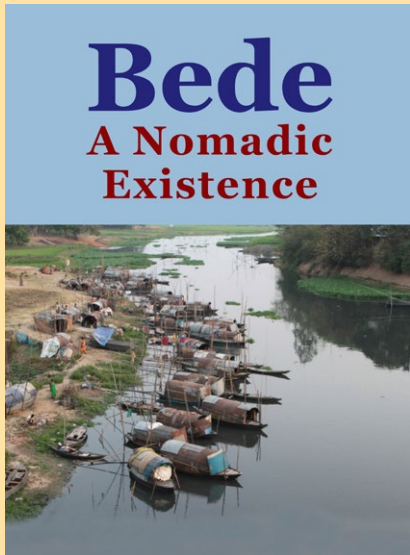


# Harijans of Bangladesh



# বাংলাদেশের যৌনপল্লী ও যৌনকর্মী

হালনাগাদ চিত্র ২০১৮



# Bede A Nomadic Existence

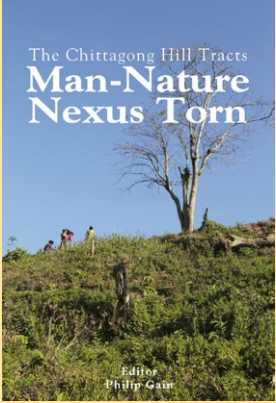
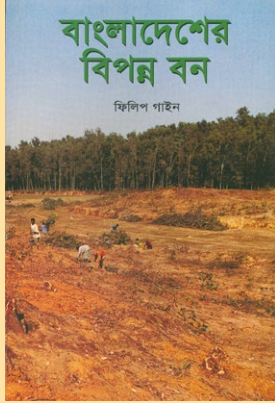
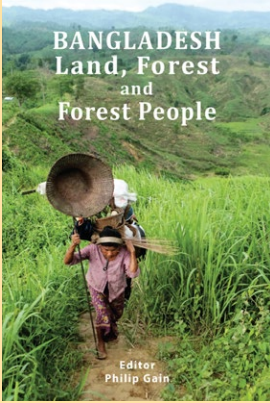
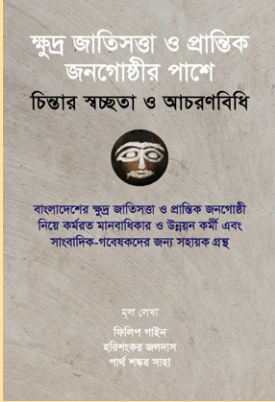
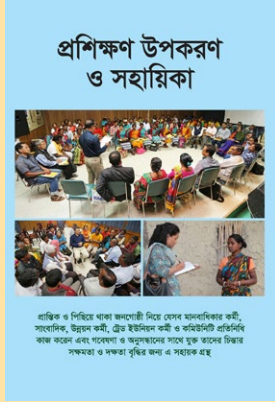


# চা শ্রমিকের সাংস্কৃতিক জীবন মনোপ্রাফ ও ডাইরেক্টরি



চা বাগানসমূহে সুষম স্তর মানদণ্ড জাতিসংঘের মহা মিলনক্ষেত্র এবং তাদের ভাষা ও সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্যে অবাক করার মতো। চা বাগানের মানুষের ভাষা ও সাংস্কৃতিক জীবন নিয়ে যারা জানেন ও প্বেষণা করবে 'আমহী' এবং চা বাগানে তারা সংস্কৃতির চর্চা করেন এ মনোপ্রাফ ও ডাইরেক্টরি মূলত তাদের জন্য।





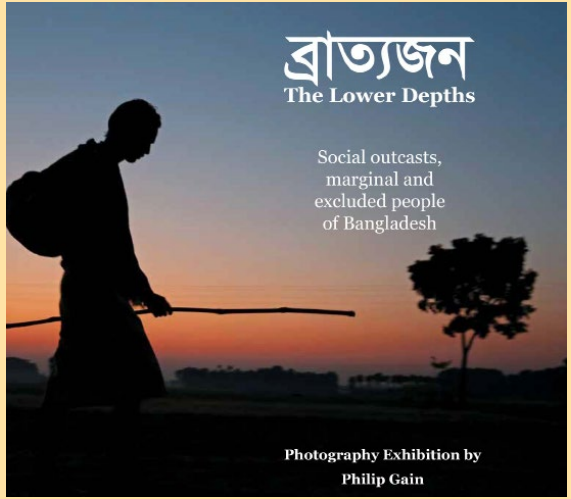




# ব্রাত্যজন

The Lower Depths

ফিলিপ গাইন



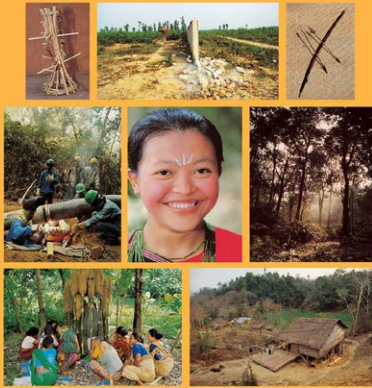
# ব্রাত্যজন

The Lower Depths

Social outcasts,  
marginal and  
excluded people  
of Bangladesh

Photography Exhibition by  
Philip Gain

Photography Exhibition by Philip Gain



অরণ্য ও অরণ্যের সংস্কৃতি  
Forests and Forest Culture

অরণ্যের ক্রন্দন Cry of the Forest



Photography Exhibition by Philip Gain

## On the Margins

Images of Tea Workers and Ethnic Communities

Photography Exhibitions by  
Philip Gain and Others

Drik Gallery  
House-58, Road-15 A (New), Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209  
17 to 21 April 2016 | 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm

## Leaving No One Behind

Convention on Social, Economic and Political Protection  
of Marginal and Excluded Communities

22-23 November 2018 Sreemangal

Organized by  
Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD), Power and  
Participation Research Centre (PPRC), Christian Commission for  
Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) and Green Bilahs Kendra (GBK)

This project is funded by the European Union and ICCO COOPERATION

## The Story of Tea Workers

চা শ্রমিকের কথা

Photography Exhibition by  
Philip Gain

Drik Gallery  
10 to 19 May 2009 3:00 PM to 8:00 PM



# ব্রাত্যজন

## The Lower Depths

Marginalized  
and  
excluded people  
of Bangladesh



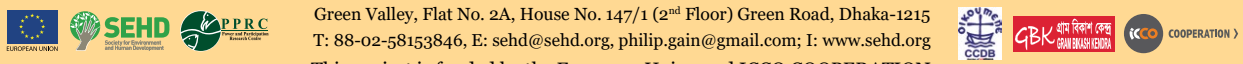
Faces of most of 80 tea communities, Advisis of the plains and key excluded communities and social outcasts are seen in the poster.

“To be excluded from common facilities or benefits that others have can certainly be a significant handicap that impoverishes the lives that individuals can enjoy.” —Amartya Sen

Photo and Design: Philip Gain and Prosad Sarkar

Contact

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 Green Valley, Flat No. 2A, House No. 147/1 (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor) Green Road, Dhaka-1215  
 T: 88-02-58153846, E: sehd@sehd.org, philip.gain@gmail.com; I: www.sehd.org  
 This project is funded by the European Union and ICCO COOPERATION







“Being excluded from social relations can lead to other deprivations as well, thereby further limiting our living opportunities (such as undernourishment or homelessness). Social exclusion can, thus, be constitutively a part of capability deprivation as well as instrumentally a cause of diverse capability failures.” —Amartya sen



### Contact

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E: philip.gain@gmail.com; sehd@sehd.org, www.sehd.org

Text and photos except those in the middle of page 16  
and last page: Philip Gain | Layout: Prosad Sarker