



## MATI NGO

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# FROM THE FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The MATI organization places a specific emphasis on developing its own personnel by assisting them in raising a MATI family for our future work. Our goals to grow our own employees are driven by a number of programs that are specifically targeted at young adolescents through stipend programs.

MATI Eco Village is a vibrant living community where many staff members live with their families and children as they grow up surrounded by MATI's culture.

The youngsters are very motivated to make MATIs work for all members of society regardless of ethnicity, culture, or religion after they accept the MATI working environment and coexist with people of diverse beliefs.

MATI is an excellent platform to put these goals into effect since I believe that everyone has potential regardless of their background.

I'm glad to present the 2022 Annual Report before another fruitful year. For their warm and ongoing support throughout our journey, I am grateful to all of our development partners, our target population, the staff, relevant government and local government authorities like NGOAB, the department of social service, local administration offices, city corporation leaders, and all other stakeholders.

Currently, meeting the sustainable development goals as soon as feasible before the deadline of 2030 is our key priority. We sincerely believe that the friendly assistance of all the MATI stakeholders would make our trip more comfortable and straightforward.

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Thanking you

**Lenen Rahaman**

ED, MATI Bangladesh

ED, MATI Bangladesh

## ACHIEVEMENT AT A GLANCE IN 2022

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY PROGRAM

#### Integrated Development Approach for the Extreme Poor (IDAEP):

Total 2024 women cooperative members (96% are women) have got holistic development support including credit support for income generation activities. By the end of 2021, the groups have a total savings of BDT 51,02,410 while the loan outstanding loan was BDT 1,20,25,412

#### MATI COOPERATIVE

With facilitation and development support from MATI the target people have organized them in their cooperative consisting of 1979 members from 26 villages of Mymensingh, Jamalpur and Sherpur districts.

### AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

#### Farmer Training on Organic Agriculture

Total 370 members of the cooperative received both theoretical and hand on training on organic farming, food crop preservation and processing from the project supported by MISEREOR, MATI e.V and FVBBS.

#### Kitchen Gardening

Total 620 women have produced different kinds of vegetables both in summer and winter season in their Kitchen Gardens. The major part of the vegetables produced in the garden were mainly consumed by the families, which improved their food & nutrition security status while a good number of them also earned some extra income for their family by selling the surplus to the market that also helped in enhancing women empowerment.

#### Installation of individual drying shelves

Total 40 families established individual drying facilities shelves at their homestead for drying seeds, spices, fishes, and handmade pickles & cakes etc.

#### Organic Marketing

Total 829 farmer families are engaged so far to produce organic crops at homestead and in the field in 20 villages of Sherpur, Jamalpur & Mymensingh district.

### HEALTH AND WASH PROGRAM

#### Primary health care and eyecare services

- Health Awareness Meeting and Training: 212 (approx. 10200 patients)
- Eye Screening Camp: 92 (approx. 22000 patients)
- Eye Center Patients: 2178 patients
- Spectacle's support: 78 patients
- Identification of Cataract: 471 patients
- Eye Screened in the Field: 10902 patients
- Free Medicine received: 3404 patients
- Cataracts Operation: 212 elderly patients
- Physiotherapy received: 204 disabled children

#### VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Total 674 trainees (114 boys and 560 girls) in 43 batches receive training on computer, Carpentry, Beauty parlour, Welding and sewing.

### QUALITY EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

#### PROJAPOTI DAYCARE CENTERS

5 rural DCCs including one for disabled are run by MATI's own fund where 178 disadvantaged children are getting early childhood development services.

#### MATI ECO-PRIMARY SCHOOL, HUZURIKANDA

In the school 150 students (65 are boys and 85 girls) are getting quality education upto class-V and ecological awareness. There are 10 female teachers in the school.

#### STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM (SSP)

241 children (36 boys and 205 girls) from extremely poor families received monthly stipend of BDT 500 to 1000 each to continue their education. Four development partners of MATI namely Stiftung 100, Stiftung Brücke, Stiftung Balingen and MATI e.V. supported the SSP.

#### STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR PARAMEDIC COURSE

10 paramedic trainees were supported to conduct their courses in Taleb Ali MATS (Medical Assistant Training Institute) at Mymensingh. Four students have already completed their courses while the 6 students are continuing

## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE & DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

### **Awareness Campaign on Climate Change Issues**

Like every year a six-daylong cycling campaign was held to raise awareness of mass people on climate change issues. A total of 11 cyclists took part in the bicycle rally, travelling around 200km covering 4 districts and 5 Upazilas.

### **Clean City Campaign**

Like every year clean city campaign was held to raise peoples' awareness on waste solid waste management and cleanliness. 30 children and teenagers aged between 5 and 25 years, who regularly motivate their neighbors with small actions to keep the area clean.

### **Building Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation Strategies**

119 households received financial support for SACK gardening, storage of crops and different alternative livelihood options such as Boat Purchase, Cloth Business, Grocery Shop, Milk Business, Cow Rearing, Tea Stall, Vegetable Shop, Rickshaw-Van purchases etc.

### **Setting tree nursery and plantation campaign**

8,000+ saplings of fruit, timber and medicinal valued trees covering the crucially important locations like schools, school-adjointing areas, villages, roadsides and char areas Mymensingh and Sherpur district.

### **Climate Change Network (CCN) in Greater Mymensingh**

MATI is hosting the Secretariat of the Network and Mr Lenen Rahman, the ED of MATI is the Chairperson of the Network. The network is primarily engaged in advocacy and public awareness campaigns on the issue of climate change.

### **Emergency Safety materials support and safety awareness**

12,500 facial masks and 3150 soaps to the poor people of its working area and to the working people on the streets such as rickshaw-van-auto pullers, small traders, and daily labourers etc. MATI provided food support to 1124 families for 3 months during and after the lockdown.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

All the students of the school were provided with a healthy lunch on a daily basis to improve their nutrition

## **RESEARCH, ADVOCACY & CAMPAIGN PROGRAM**

### **Research on Hidden Dimension of Poverty**

We successfully completed 2 physical dissemination workshops with a total number of 125 participants.

### **Model SDG Village Development**

15,000 saplings of different fruits, timbers and medicinal trees were distributed to the students for planting in the surrounding villages and roadsides, canal sides and the premises of schools and other institutions as part of environmental protection and climate change mitigation activities.

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# AN OVERVIEW OF MATI

## HISTORY OF INCEPTION

MATI is a Non-Government Organization (NGO), established in 1997 and registered under the Department of Social Services in 1998 and under the NGO Affairs Bureau in 2000.

MATI was founded through the personal conviction of its founder Lenen Rahaman that the extreme poverty in rural Bangladesh is a severe form of injustice (as it is anywhere else in the world), which cannot be tolerated in any society that claims to be civilized. With a small group of friends, to whom he shared his basic humanist ideas, he came forward to start the first MATI-project in the small village Huzurikanda under Sherpur District. From the beginning, poverty reduction through people's empowerment, especially of women, and self-defined, participatory development methods were at the core of MATI's activities. Since those early days, MATI's activities have continuously expanded, and its mission, vision and goals have been fine-tuned over the years.

## OUR BELIEFS

We strongly believe in a universal right to a life in dignity for all human beings. Through all our actions we do our best to reflect the principles of equality, fairness, democracy, good governance and human rights. Conflicts have to be solved solely through peaceful means. We see an intact ecosystem as a prerequisite for a successful, sustainable development and the well-being of all people.

Ever since the beginning of MATI's work, we have put all our good faith and effort – together with our partners on local, national and international level – towards the realization of our ultimate goal: to realize our dream of One World where also secure livelihoods for the poorest of the poor are guaranteed, a dream based on the universal principles of love and compassion for every human being.

We regard our work as a most needed statement of solidarity and fairness, and of maximum companionship in contrast to maximum profit. We perceive ourselves as just one tiny part in the bigger picture of all those who are working towards a better tomorrow for all sentient beings – in this world of plenty.

## OUR VISION

MATI aims to join all its human forces, energy, and love in the universal fight against poverty and towards a life in dignity for all human beings, regardless of gender, status, color or creed.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the organization is to develop a self-defined development process for the marginalized poor farmers and to gear up the people who are called extreme poor through involving them in innovative Agricultural and livelihood development activities.

## **OUR GOAL**

Empower underprivileged and marginalized people for a better life through innovative & environment friendly agricultural interventions and the capacity building for a self-defined development.

## **OUR SUSTAINABLE APPROACH**

Since late 1999, MATI has pursued participatory and people-centered forms of development, specifically focused on women and children. We have keenly observed that there is one big reason why development projects sometimes fail: there is no backup-support in times of crisis. However, this we consider imminent in a country that is so prone to natural calamities. So, in order not to lose our achievements mid-way, we try to offer immediate help, when possible, to support people in overcoming the crisis and in continuing on the path to development.

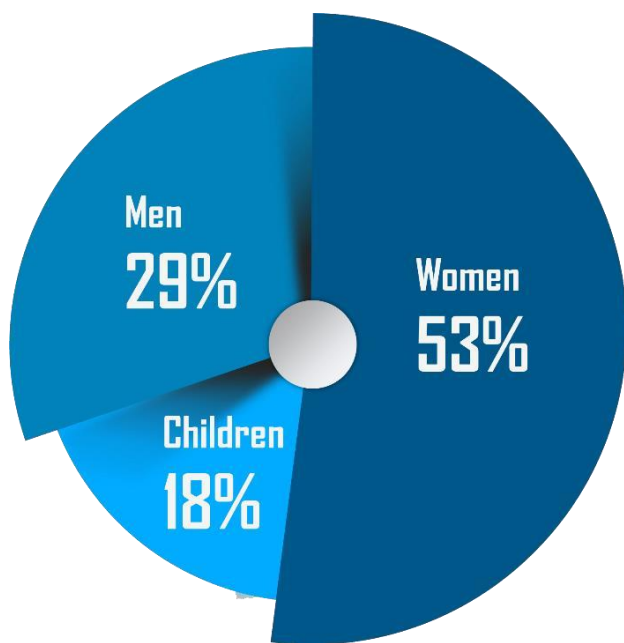
We believe that societies already hold the tools for their own development in their hands. So together with those concerned, the poor, we try to find ways to activate these tools. Poor people have a lot of ideas and initiative on how to make a change towards the better. What they lack is capital or the access to capital, which would help them make a start. Additionally, the poor are often locked into exploitative social structures. So, it is MATI's task to access funds, which can be used towards the improvement of livelihoods, in such a way that whole community's benefit.

Our ultimate goal is for our people to achieve independence, so that they do not need our programs anymore, because they can manage on their own. We see our role as mediators to help them climb up on the first steps of the development ladder and from there to continue on their own. We believe that our task is to break up dependencies not to create them. Yet, there are people who are beyond the capacity to help themselves, we do not close our doors on them either.

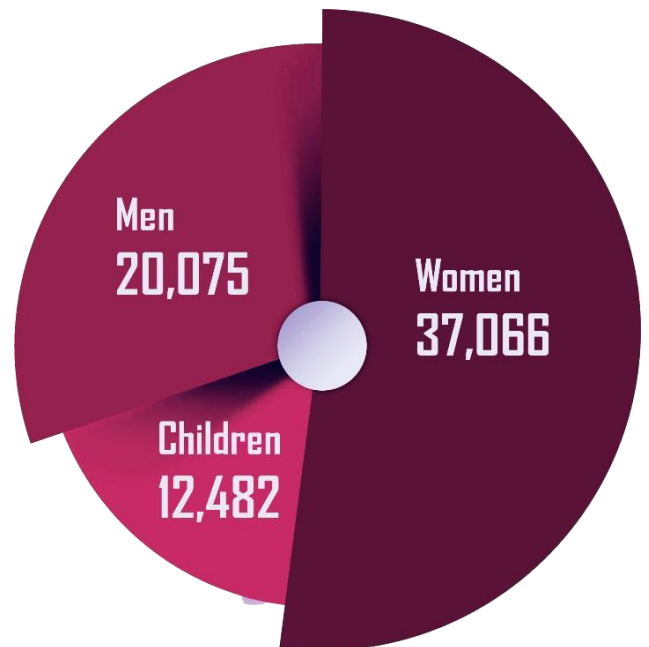
## OUR BENEFICIARIES

MATI focuses on the extremely poor, marginalized farmers, sharecroppers, women, Dalits, children with physical disabilities, and other disadvantaged groups of the population, mostly in rural and urban areas.

Through various initiatives, MATI serves 69,623 direct beneficiaries, while also serving more than 250,000 indirect beneficiaries. Of the direct recipients, 53% of them are women, 29% are men, and 18% are children.

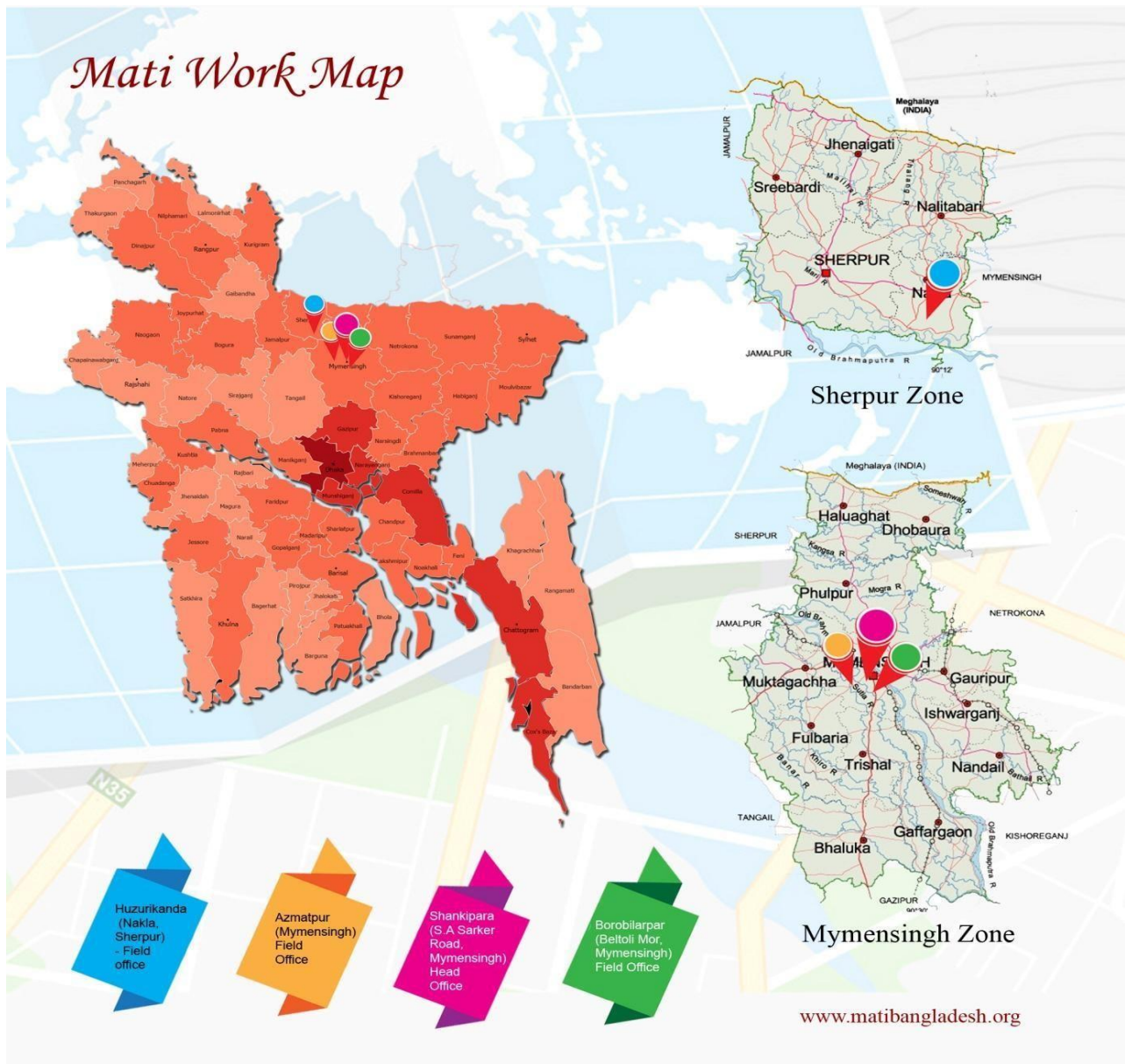


Direct beneficiaries of MATI (%)



Direct beneficiaries of MATI (number)

## OUR WORKING AREA



| Division     | District                 | Upazila  | Union    | Village/ward |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Mymensingh   | Mymensingh               | 1        | 4        | 40           |
|              | Mymensingh (Urban Slums) | -        | -        | 10           |
|              | Sherpur                  | 1        | 3        | 30           |
|              | Jamalpur                 | 1        | 1        | 20           |
| Dhaka        | Tangail                  | 1        | 1        | 10           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>4</b>                 | <b>4</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>110</b>   |

# OUR PROGRAMS:

## MAJOR PROGRAMS OF MATI

The major programs of MATI are -

1. Economic Development and Social Security
2. Agriculture and Food Security
3. Environment Protection and Climate Action
4. Health and WASH
5. Quality Education and Human Resource Development
6. Research, Advocacy and Campaign

Moreover, MATI has strong capacity and actions on emergency response to natural disasters like flood, cold wave, river erosion, cyclone etc.

## THE SDG GOALS (Sustainable Development Goals) TO ACHIEVE BY MATI'S PROGRAMS

MATI directly or indirectly addresses the following SDGs through its programs and the programMATIC strategies and approaches. The program directly strives to achieve the SDG-1& 11 by Economic Development and Social Security program, SDG-2 by Agriculture and Food Security Program, SDG-3 & 6 by Health & WASH Program, SDG-4 & 8 by Quality Education & Human Resource Development Program, SDG-7,12 & 13 by Environment Protection & Climate Action Program while the SDG-5 & 10 are mainstreamed in all the programMATIC supports & services in order to reducing Gender Inequality and all other forms of inequalities prevailing in the society.



MATI focused more on Sustainable Development, Women Empowerment and Better Livelihood of the poor in 2020 by introducing Mati Farmer Cooperative (COOP).

Women or girls made up more than 70% of the program participants who have better income, improved food security, increased access to health services, quality education and empowerment as a whole.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY PROGRAM

## IDAEP PROGRAM

One of MATI core program, Integrated Development Approach for the Extreme Poor (IDAEP), was launched in 2009. The initiative provides interest-free credit to extremely impoverished households in order to help them build their livelihoods through income-generating ventures and meet their fundamental human requirements.



The "savings and credit" initiative was established by MATI under the IDAEP. The families are given an initial interest-free loan of up to BDT15,000 to engage in income-producing ventures of their choice and ability. Families are urged to save money on a regular basis to improve their financial stability and security. Only the female household members are eligible for the credits in order to promote women's empowerment.

In order to promote their holistic development, MATI works side by side with the program's target families to integrate health, family planning, WASH, childcare, child education, agricultural, and housing initiatives. This includes vocational and other skill development training as well as awareness-raising activities.

Starting with 100 women in 2009, a total of 1621 women in 81 groups from 18 villages saved BDT 51,02,410 by the end of 2022. The outstanding loan in 2022 was BDT 1,20,25,412 which the female members had taken out to invest in income-generating activities like crop production, raising small businesses for cow, goat, chicken, and rickshaw purchase, as well as for house construction or repair, setting tube-well or water pump, installing sanitary latrine, treatment, children's education, etc. that helped to increase their income, improve their

livelihood status, improve health, WASH, and education, among other things.

## **MATI COOPERATIVE**

The poor rural people who are especially smallholder farmers have been struggling to survive in the context of commercial agriculture which is promoted by the government. But the



workforce who are migrating to the urban areas are being uprooted from agriculture and becoming slum dwellers to live a subhuman life. Such migration is also creating many social, health, educational and environmental problems along with vulnerability in livelihoods. On the other hand, agriculture is going into the hands of corporations who are promoting chemical agriculture which is devastating for soil, the environment and human health. Moreover, traditional & sustainable family farming is going to disappear.

In such a context, upon a series of discussions with farmers and based on their decisions MATI has taken a new initiative to develop farmers' cooperatives for sustainable development of the smallholder farmers who are the absolute majority among the rural poor people. MATI has conducted a survey on the vast majority of people involved in agriculture and farming in which it was found that the farmers are shifting their thousand years' traditional organic farming to commercial farming to increase crop production. In this circumstance, MATI aims to bring back that organic culture and as a part of this, through the market research, MATI

started this program in April 2019. The registration of this program under the department of cooperative of the government of Bangladesh is in progress to develop a value chain model by the COOP to ensure better market access of the farming families & women empowerment.

### Value Chain Model of MATI Cooperative



So far the cooperative has 2024 members and all of them are women from 26 villages of Mymensingh, Sherpur and Jamalpur District. The foundation stage of the cooperative is going on through a participatory process.

MATI COOP has already planned to open a COOP input shop for solving input related problems of the farmers by making all possible inputs available for the farmers. After the full operation of the shop on a bigger scale, which may take a little longer the COOP will take the dealership of the different inputs so that the farmers get quality inputs at reasonable prices or even in credits.

MATI COOP has also planned to establish a storehouse to store the non-perishable crops of the COOP members at Chandrakona Bazar under Naklaupazila of Sherpur district so that the COOP members can preserve their crops during the growing season when the prices remain low to sell during off season when the prices usually go higher in order to ensure better prices for the farmers.

## **PORONTO BELA**

**[for the social security of elderly people]**

The elderly has a right to live in dignity. But regrettably, older people in Bangladesh frequently have to rely on their sons or daughters, placing a strain on them. The elderly used to live terribly wretched lives, especially in poor families, being denied their basic human rights. The majority of older persons have various ailments, and their families typically cannot afford the hefty cost of their care.

In such a situation, MATI stepped up to address the problem by launching a support program for elderly persons who are utterly defenseless. Since June 2010, MATI has been giving 8 people 1000 Taka on their own fundings.

In 2021, MATI extended the help as usual as part of this ongoing initiative with its extremely limited own fund. If sufficient funding can be raised, MATI hopes to scale up the initiative soon.

In addition to the special allowance, MATI's healthcare program always offers special healthcare services to the elderly. MATI also works with local government agencies to ensure that its recipients get the Elderly Allowance from the federal government.



## **AGRICULTURE and FOOD Security**

### **PROMOTION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE**

- *Farmer Training on Organic Agriculture*

One of MATI's main initiatives is to promote organic farming in order to safeguard the environment, preserve soil health, resist the negative effects of climate change, and increase the production of healthy food for the nation's food security.

Together with technical inputs and financial start-up help, the development of the farmers' capacity is a crucial strategy. 315 female members in total 370 received training on organic

agriculture production, preservation, and processing in 2022. The training and support were supplied by MATI's development partners, MISEREOR, MATI e.V., and FVBBS.

- ***Kitchen Gardening***

Families in the MATI's working area have a small plot of land at their farmhouse where they can start kitchen gardens. throughout their kitchen gardens, a total of 620 women cultivated various crops throughout both the summer and winter of 2022. The majority of the vegetables grown in the garden were primarily consumed by the families, improving their level of food & nutrition security. A significant number of them also made some extra money for their families by selling the surplus to the market, which also aided in promoting women's empowerment.



- ***Developing Individual and Community based Drying and Storage System***

Six community drying domes are installed for shared usage by the project's target groups in its communal courtyard. At MATI Eco-Village Huzurikanda, one dome was set up for demonstration and community use by Huzurikanda Farmer Cooperative members. The families who are using the drying dome were chosen from those who grow organic rice, legumes, spices, etc. Each dome, which is actually like a greenhouse with a volume of 33.1m<sup>3</sup> and dimensions of 4.6m by 3.0m by 2.4m, is composed of a steel frame with plexiglass walls and a roof.

- ***Installation of individual drying facilities***

40 families receive start-up funding to create their own drying facilities. With technical assistance from MATI, the families constructed two types of compact dryers, taking into account the utilities. The majority of families have already begun drying their winter harvests, including tomatoes, dried fish, chilies, turmeric, and other hand-made things, in order to sell



them on the market for better rates. The other form likewise consists of polythene sheets, black cloth, and wood. This sort of dryer, which is more appropriate in high moisture conditions, was only built by a small number of families. The dryers are anticipated to have a significant impact on the growth of the value chain for women's products, resulting in their economic empowerment.

- **Organic Marketing**

MATI has begun creating a supply chain of organic products from the target population to urban customers in order to improve the promotion of organic farming and secure profitable prices for organic producers. Currently, perishable goods like vegetables, fruits, chicken, eggs, and milk are sold to both local and urban consumers twice a month, while non-perishable goods like rice, mustard oil, lentils, and spices are only provided on a pilot basis. MATI team assists farmers in receiving orders from consumers and fulfilling them.

With assistance from MISEREOR, Germany, MATI has been attempting to set up a value chain for organic products and open an organic shop in Mymensingh town. Recently, the target population united under farmer cooperatives in order to enhance the project, and they have already made the decision to support the cooperative's endeavors for organic production and selling. MATI has made the decision to support the cooperative's development process in order to establish it as an institution. It will take some time for the target population to develop the necessary management skills to successfully and independently run the cooperative.

By the end of 2022, a total of 829 farmer families are engaged so far to produce organic crops at homestead and in the field in 20 villages of Sherpur, Jamalpur & Mymensingh district.

## SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM



The underprivileged youngsters who attend the MATI Eco-school from poor and extremely destitute homes typically continue to go without food. Additionally, they must attend class from morning till afternoon on an empty stomach, which makes it difficult for them to focus while studying and compromises their health and nutrition.

Given this, MATI launched the School Lunch Program in 2012, which has been running ever since. To boost their nutritional state, a healthy lunch was given to every student at the school each day in 2022. Additionally, the kids said that they loved the lunch since it improved their attentiveness and attendance at class

## FREE LUNCH PROGRAM FOR THE HUNGRY PEOPLE

A huge number of hungry people move to and from the town of Mymensingh, in fact, all over Bangladesh in search of food to meet their hunger. Sometimes they get food, but sometimes they don't. Sometimes, they get some wasted food from the houses. Only a plate of rice, fresh or rotten, may help meet their hunger but neither the hunger of mind nor the nutrition demand (hidden hunger) is fulfilled.

Considering this, since 2006 in Sankipara, Mymensingh, where MATI's head office is located, MATI has been feeding around 100 people with a free lunch, providing a healthy & rich diet every Thursday of a week which will continue throughout the year 2021, but because of the Corona, 100 people were given the same value of dry food things every Thursday without direct cooking.

Mainly mothers with children and old people come from the nearby Dalit community and the



street baggers also used to come to take the lunch at MATI's head office once in a week. During the pandemic of COVID-19 instead of free lunch, emergency food supports were provided to the families along with the safety materials like facial mask & soap.

## HEALTH AND WASH PROGRAM

### MPHCC, HEAD OFFICE MYMENSINGH AND HUZURIKANDA, SHERPUR

MATI began providing health services in 2005 to a Scheduled Caste Hindu minority (Dalit) population residing close to the MATI Head office in Sankipara with the goal of supporting the wellness and good health of the urban and rural poor. The MATI Primary Health Care Center (MPHCC) was subsequently built in the grounds of the MATI headquarters in 2009 with expanded services for the underprivileged and extremely underprivileged residents of the Mymensingh district, where MATI operates. The service area was then gradually expanded over the years to include the villages in Bangladesh's Mymensingh, Sherpur, and Jamalpur districts as well as the urban slums of Mymensingh City Corporation.

#### Activities & Achievements in 2022

| Activities                            | Achievements   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Health Awareness Meeting and Training | 212 Trainings (Hk-100.My-112) (approx. 10200 patients)                                     |
| Free Treatment & Medicine Support     | 3404 Patients (Medicine Cost BDT 2,50,478) (Hk-1345 My-2059 & Cost Hk-62,481, My-1,87,997) |
| Field Level Health Camp               | 6,618 Women, (HK-6,406 & My-212)   |

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Family Planning Services                   | 940 Women (Hk-498, My-442)   |
| Women Pregnancy and Post Delivery Services | 202 Women (Hk-81, My- 121)   |
| Physiotherapy Services                     | 204 Patients                 |
| Children Milk Support                      | 16 Children (Cost BDT16,000) |
| Referral Services                          | 249 Patients                 |
| Discounts for Treatment                    | 105 Patients (BDT3,71,207)   |
| Facial mask distribution for COVID-19      | 1,893 (Hk- 1,305, My-588)    |

## **MATI EYE CARE CENTRE, HUZURIKANDA**

With assistance from "Foundation Bridge Balingen-Bangladesh (FBBB)" Germany and in conjunction with BNSB Eye Hospital, Mymensingh, MATI has been offering eye care services to the underprivileged residents of its service region. Below is a chart outlining the events and accomplishments.



In order to increase MATI's capacity to offer both general and eye care services in a sustainable manner, FBBB has been assisting MATI since the beginning of 2017 in constructing a medical competence center at the Huzurikanda site. Routine eye exams and treatment, eyeglasses, preventing the start and progression of retinopathy, and LASIK surgery are all current activities at KZH.

Additionally, KZH organizes an eye camp to promote eye surgery, in addition to working with the BNSB (Bangladesh National Society for Blinds) Eye Hospital in Mymensingh, the Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute & Hospital in Sherpur, The Lion Eye Hospital in Dhaka, etc.

### **Activities & Achievements in 2022**

| <b>Activities</b>                       | <b>Achievements</b>            |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Eye Center Patients                     | 2178                           |
| Prescription for Spectacles             | 535                            |
| Spectacles Prepared/ Spectacles Support | 78                             |
| Eye Screening Camp                      | 92                             |
| Identification of Cataract              | 471                            |
| Distribution of Medicines               | 1345 participants & cost-63826 |
| Cataracts Operation                     | 212                            |
| Patients Screened in the Field          | 10902                          |
| Awareness Sessions on COVID-19          | 97 (approx. 3510 participants) |

## PHYSIOTHERAPY



In September 2010, Ms. Steffi Rettenmeier, a German Volunteer, launched the "Physiotherapy in Bangladesh" project at the MATI NGO in Mymensingh. Since that time, MPHCC has consistently offered physiotherapy services, paying particular attention to the requirements of PWDs. On a regular basis, volunteer German physiotherapists come to MATI and offer physiotherapy services specifically for patients with PWD, paralysis, accidents, etc.

Unfortunately, no volunteer

physiotherapist was able to travel to Bangladesh since 2021 because to the Corona Virus outbreak. The provision of physiotherapy services has not, however, been interrupted and will continue as soon as the epidemic permits it. During the reporting year, 204 impaired children from MATI's disability schools received regular physiotherapy services from MATI's qualified employees.

## WASH ACTIVITIES



As was previously noted, MATI has been offering credit support to the families as part of the savings and credit program. Furthermore, because a significant portion of the families in the working area still lack access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, the development partners of MATI occasionally also provide support for the installation of a sanitary latrine and drinking water pumps or tube wells. In the year 2022, 35 families received support from Stiftung Brücke to install tube wells and sanitary latrines at their homes.

### **ESTABLISHMENT of a PHARMACY & OUTPATIENT CLINIC at KZH**

With funding from the German donor agency SEZ through the FVBBB, a pharmacy and outpatient clinic were established in 2021 and have been operating at the KZH campus since mid-April. The MATI Cooperative chose the name "MATI Dispensary" for the dispensary, based on the brand MATI (Soil). It is important to emphasize that Mr. Babu Mia is the Entrepreneur who built the Pharmacy or Dispensary under the Coop's aim to develop entrepreneurship and make it self-run. The dispensary has a refrigerator, a lockable cabinet, a table, chairs, a bench, etc. A paramedic and a pharmacist work alongside a diploma doctor who routinely attends the outpatient clinic from 3 to 9 o'clock in the afternoon.

The outpatient clinic treats 48 patients a day on average, on average. The pharmacy offers consumers high-quality medications at reasonable prices, and the MATI Cooperative's Health Security Program offers some medications at no cost to patients who are extremely underprivileged. When treating serious illnesses, doctors used to send patients to Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital, which MATI has a strong relationship with, or to local government hospitals at Upazila and district headquarters, where they could receive

better care at a lower price. According on their financial situation, patients pay for the medical treatments they receive. Through donations and additional revenue from wealthier patients, MATI covers the actual expenditures.

Additionally, some basic medical supplies and free medications have been given to the KZH to improve the services provided to people with general health issues. The general medical staff at KZH also organizes a recurring health camp to serve the people who reside in Charland's outlying communities.

## **QUALITY EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

### **PROJAPOTI DAYCARE CENTERS**

*[for the children of poor working mothers living in the urban areas]*



Since 2015, Mati has successfully developed eight day-care centres in Mymensingh City in collaboration with Caritas Switzerland and Caritas Luxembourg (financed through July 2018). These day-care centres offered a secure and supportive atmosphere where they could enjoy childhood while their mothers were at work. They also help the children overcome developmental challenges brought on by poverty and prepare them for the transition to formal education. The project also aimed to improve the health, nutrition, and cognitive development of the children through various activities and interventions.

The project ended in 2020 and Mati had to phase out some of the day-care centres due to lack of funds. After the phase-out of the above-mentioned Day-care project, Mati managed to continue 5 day-care centres, 3 in rural areas and 2 in city corporation areas with support from Mati e.V, Germany. One of these day-care centres was established in Nakla, Sherpur (Jonaki Day-care), and it provides day-care services to 18 children with impairments. Volunteers from abroad offer free physiotherapy services at this centre. The other 4 day-care centres are providing top-notch day-care, Early Childhood Development (ECD), and Essence of Learning (EOL) based education to 178 children between 2020 and 2022.

These day-cares also provide nutritious meals, health check-ups, immunization, deworming, hygiene kits, and recreational facilities to the children. The day-cares also involve the parents and community members in the management and monitoring of the centres and organize awareness sessions on child rights, health, nutrition, and education.

## **MATI ECO-PRIMARY SCHOOL, HUZURIKANDA**

In order to make quality education affordable for poor families, MATI started its first free school at MATI Eco-Village at Huzurikanda called MATI Eco-School. At the MATI Eco-Primary-School, 312 students are currently being provided with quality education. In 2022, 150 new and old students are enrolled in the school, among them 65 are boys and 85 are girls.

MATI opened its first free school, known as MATI Eco-School, in MATI Eco-Village in Huzurikanda in order to make quality education affordable for low-income families. Presently, 166 pupils are receiving a top-notch education at the MATI Eco-Primary School; 76 of them are boys and 90 are girls.

The school offers totally free of cost education up to class 5 plus one year of the preschool class. There are 10 female teachers in the school.

The students of MATI Eco-School avail very good results every year with a good reputation. Apart from the regular classes, students are also involved with extracurricular activities like sports, cultural activities, gardening, nursery & plantation and environmental education etc. The teachers are trained to teach by following the Swiss education method “Essence of learning” in all classes.



From 1999 to 2022, a total of 799 students passed from the school. Last year, 20 students had a brilliant result when they passed the primary school examination. From the school, the students acquire knowledge of formal education, as well as social ethics, global warming, organic agriculture, and other important topics. The students are now able to recognize the difference between right and wrong, identify their strengths and areas for growth, and raise their voices against injustice. In addition to education, the students are now able to cooperate, share, and care for others, especially in times of emergency. They are also able to work in teams and show empathy for others. Furthermore, they can help increase the income of their family by installing a kitchen garden in their small yard. This will not only benefit them financially, but also give them a better understanding of the environment and the importance of sustainability.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM (SSP)**

In Bangladesh, child marriage is a problem that can only be resolved via education. It is one of the main reasons why so many girls drop out of secondary and higher school. Due to their financial situation, poor parents used to arrange their daughters' marriages when they were still quite young. Since 2005, MATI has operated the SSP to assist parents who, in spite of their extreme poverty, opt to have children rather than get married.



In 2022, a total of 241 children (36 boys and 205 girls) from Mymensingh, Jamalpur and Sherpur districts receive a monthly stipend of BDT 500 to 1000 each which is a sum of BDT 150,000 per month. Four development partners of MATI namely Stiftung 100, Stiftung Brücke, Stiftung Balingen and MATI e.V. supported the SSP.

Apart from the monthly stipend, the students get extra support for instance school registration fees, buying expensive stationery products, receive health support, etc. They are also provided with different hands-on awareness education and training on health-related issues and they are engaged in social development and environmental protection activities.

## **STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR PARAMEDIC COURSE**

In Bangladesh, there aren't enough trained medical personnel to deliver high-quality care, particularly in rural areas. The fact that the rural poor rely so heavily on untrained medication vendors for their primary healthcare services causes everyone a great deal of anxiety.

In such a situation, MATI Bangladesh began a project in January 2016 called "Job Creation for

Young Adolescent Girls and Boys, Enrolment in Vocational Training Institutes, and Practical Training at MATI Health Care Project in the North of Bangladesh" with friends and partner organizations, especially with "Foundation Bridge Brücke Balingen (FBBB)" of Germany. To date, Taleb Ali MATS (Medical Assistant Training Institute) in Mymensingh has provided funding for 10 paramedic students to complete their coursework. While the remaining 4 pupils are still enrolled in classes, 6 students have already finished their coursework.

## **VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

MATI has recognized the high prevalence of unemployment among young adults, particularly those from rural areas, as a major socio-economic challenge. MATI has also identified the lack of adequate, affordable and effective vocational training facilities for the general public as the main barrier for young people from disadvantaged families to acquire a technical qualification that would equip them with the necessary skills and certificates for better job prospects. Therefore, since 2000, MATI has been offering various training courses to create employment



opportunities for young adults, especially females. MATI has already made significant progress in establishing a training institute called MATI Vocational and Technical Training Centre (MVTTTC) that offers eight training courses at present. MVTTTC has already obtained conditional approval from the Technical Education Board to conduct training on two trades: 1. Computer Office Application and 2. Electrical House Wiring. To obtain approval for other

courses, the required infrastructure and facilities have to be completed as soon as possible

By 2022, MVTTTC has offered eight training courses for 674 trainees (114 boys and 560 girls) in 43 batches as presented in the table below.

**Table: List of ongoing training courses offered by MVTTTC**

| Sl. | Course Title                          | Total no. of trainees |      |       | Total no. of batches |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|----------------------|
|     |                                       | Girls                 | Boys | Total |                      |
| 01  | Computer Training                     | 43                    | 28   | 71    | 8                    |
| 02  | Sewing Cutting Training( Four Centre) | 183                   |      | 183   | 17                   |
| 03  | Carpentry Training                    |                       | 10   | 10    | 2                    |
| 04  | Agricultural Organic Training         | 315                   | 55   | 370   | 13                   |
| 05  | Beauty Parlor Training                | 10                    |      | 10    | 1                    |
| 06  | Mobile Servicing Training             |                       | 10   | 10    | 1                    |
| 07  | Paramedic Training                    | 9                     | 1    | 10    |                      |
| 08  | Welding Training                      |                       | 10   | 10    | 1                    |
|     | Total=                                | 560                   | 114  | 674   | 43                   |

## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE & DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

- *Awareness Campaign on Climate Change Issues*

As one of the country's most at risk from Climate Change, MATI Bangladesh has a strong team of climate fighters, climate guides, hundreds of student volunteers and an NGO network working in the Mymensingh division to join the global fight against global warming and climate change. MATI and its network partners organize various events to raise awareness of the climate change issues among the mass people during the "Annual Campaign Week on Climate Change". Following the previous years, MATI Bangladesh held a six-day cycling campaign with the slogan "We control Climate Change - cycling for a better climate in Greater Mymensingh" from 24-29 February 2022. The campaign covered 4 districts and 5 Upazilas with a total distance of 200km by 11 cyclists. The campaigners talked about the climate change issues with the students, teachers, local government leaders and local administration offices along the way.

- *Clean City Campaign*

In order to reduce environmental pollution, MATI established a program called the "Clean City

Campaign" on the first day of the New Year in 2022. Additionally, MATI was able to maintain the district garbage collection system in Sankipara in previous years, when 100 new residences joined. For a little monthly cost, a bicycle rickshaw will pick up your domestic trash every day and take it to the landfill.

30 children and teenagers, ages 5 to 25, work with MATI to inspire the community to keep the area clean by performing small actions. Given the garbage produced in residential areas, it is great that Mymensingh's City Corporation has taken the cleanliness drive under its wing.

- ***Building Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation Strategies***

With assistance from Caritas Luxembourg, MATI Bangladesh carried out a climate project named "Building Resilience and capacities of climate change affected poor farming families in the Brahmaputra Char Basin." The undertaking began in April 2017 and was completed in March 2020. MATI actively works on a regular basis in the Brahmaputra River basin, Mymensingh, and Sherpur districts as part of adaptation efforts.

119 households received financial assistance in 2022 for SACK gardening, crop storage, and a variety of alternative livelihood possibilities, including the purchase of a boat, clothing, groceries, milk businesses, cow-rearing operations, tea stalls, vegetable shops, and rickshaw-vans. The women stepped forward, overcoming social barriers that had prevented them from engaging in commercial activities that are typically the domain of men.

In addition, 2150 people received training from qualified instructors in agriculture and various revenue sources.

- ***Setting tree nursery and plantation campaign***

As a climate change mitigation measure, MATI annually distributes and plants saplings of fruit, timber, and medicinally valuable trees in the districts of Mymensingh and Sherpur. MATI ensures the participation of MATI volunteers, local elites, SSP students, parents of the MATI School, as well as local government bodies. In order to maintain consistency, MATI planted more than 8000+ saplings of fruit, wood, and medicinally valuable trees in Mymensingh and Sherpur district's schools, school-adjacent areas, villages, roadside areas, and char regions by the year 2022.

- ***Climate Change Network (CCN) in Greater Mymensingh***

Since its founding in 1997, MATI has organized extensive efforts to address the causes of climate change in order to increase awareness in the districts of Mymensingh and Sherpur. Nearly ten years ago, MATI established a network dubbed the "Climate Change Network" (CCN) to encourage a group of civil society individuals and groups to collaborate in order to extend the campaign throughout the region. An informal alliance of affiliated companies makes up the membership.

Mr. Lenen Rahman, the ED of MATI, serves as the Network's Chairperson, and MATI is the host of the Network's Secretariat. On the subject of climate change, the network focuses

primarily on advocacy and public awareness efforts.

## **RESEARCH, ADVOCACY & CAMPAIGN PROGRAM**

In 2019 MATI has completed the international research on “The Hidden Dimensions of Poverty”. The research was implemented both in the global north (France, UK, and the USA) and the global south (Bangladesh, Bolivia, and Tanzania) in collaboration with the University of Oxford and ATD Fourth World. The research was three years long. The uniqueness of this research is that a new participatory research approach, known as “Merging of Knowledge (MoK)” and introduced by ATD Fourth World, has been followed. In 2020, ATD has provided further support to disseminate the findings of the research works.

Bangladesh Team is supposed to organize 10 big-scale workshops to disseminate all the National findings and international merged dimensions. Target Participants for these workshops are general people, government authorities, academics, students, social workers, and activists.

Unfortunately, till the end of 2020 due to the COVID-19 situation arising worldwide, we had to stop this initiative which was supposed to start from the last week of March 2020. Most of the target institutes are still not open for all for this kind of program. As the situation did not come to a stable situation and any kind of big gathering is still prohibited, we could not organize any workshop in 2020.

Though we also have to face some difficult times in the year 2021, we successfully completed 5 physical dissemination workshops with a total number of 186 participants. In these 5 programs, we have tried to cover several professionals, Institutes, and locations.

We successfully completed the 2nd phase of the research last year. We have done 2 physical dissemination workshops at Bijoy Rakeen City, Dhaka and Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) Dinajpur with a total number of 125 participants. In these 2 programs, we have covered several professionals, Institutes, and locations. They showed their interest in our dissemination program. During the workshop, we discussed a number of topics related to our research, including its objectives and goals, the strategies and methodologies for achieving them, and the challenges that we encountered along the way. After giving our presentation on our research findings we received valuable feedback from the attendees and took their suggestions into consideration.

A 3-day pre-session was held by MATI from November 17th to the 19th, 2022 in order to prepare the final nationwide dissemination. Representatives from diverse peer groups, including Tiger widows, disabled women, ethnic minorities, and migratory women, had the chance to join together during the three-day pre-session.



Participants were able to engage in meaningful conversations, exchange ideas, and experiences, and build relationships in order to gain a better understanding of how the dimensions are related to their daily life. The pre-session was a great success and provided an invaluable experience for all involved.

On 21 November 2022, we MATI hosted a nationwide conference to discuss the findings of global participatory research on the hidden aspects of poverty at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC). The seminar was attended by a number of distinguished guests, including the special guest, Dr Ahsan H. Mansur, Executive Director of the Policy Research Institute, Bangladesh. Dr. Khandaker Md. Mostafizur Rahman, Dean of the Department of Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology at Bangladesh Agricultural University, was also in attendance, as well as H.E. Marie Masdupuy, Ambassador of the French Embassy in Dhaka. The seminar provided an opportunity for experts to come together and discuss the findings of the participatory research. The research aimed to provide insight into the unique aspects of poverty that are often overlooked. During the seminar, the panelists discussed a range of topics, from the strategies required to address poverty to the challenges of utilizing research to inform policy.

At the end of the seminar, the participants developed a set of suggestions and recommendations for implementing the findings of the research. In particular, the seminar emphasized the need to focus on the most vulnerable populations and the importance of considering the concerns of local communities when designing.

## **Model SDG Village Development**

The activities that are being implemented in the SDG villages directly address seven SDGs viz. Goal-1: No Poverty, Goal-2: Zero Hunger, Goal-3: Good Health & Wellbeing, Goal-4: Quality Education, Goal-6: Water & Sanitation, Goal-8: Decent Work & Economic Growth and Goal-13: Climate Action while Goal-5: Gender Equality is at the centre of the all activities where women & girls are the main target people of the project. Thanks to Mr Peter Haas and Mrs Bettina Mühlen-Haas and their organization Stiftung Brücke for their cordial financial & technical support and guidance in the implementation of the interventions.

However, the activities, which are being implemented in the villages, are focused on the areas of income generation, health & hygiene, water & sanitation, housing, child education and environment protection for mitigating climate change etc. The promotion of organic agricultural practices was also one of the key activities not only for the food security of the target people but also for environmental protection and sustainable production & consumption. Eliminating social stigma, especially for the women like violence against women or domestic violence, child marriage, eve-teasing etc. is also a key target project to achieve through awareness campaigns.

“Savings & Credit Program” which is free of interest was taken as one of the key strategies for not only poverty alleviation but also sustainable development of the poor & extreme poor families, especially the female members. During the reporting period, 130 families who received financial support in 2022 continued to receive credit support from the “Savings and Credit Program” to invest in income generation activities like chicken, duck, goat & cattle rearing, small business, sewing, carpentry, van purchase, land lease etc. Thus, the level of income of the families has increased. They were also inspired to accumulate their savings in order to improve their financial strength.

Besides income generation the families also got credits to improve their water and sanitation facilities by installing tube-wells/water pumps and sanitary latrines. During the reporting period, 20 water pumps and 20 toilets were installed by the target families by getting credit support while the families contributed one-third of the costs.

The MATI healthcare team used to offer regular on-site consultation on medical problems fortnightly with free of cost medicines, which gives the villagers a unique opportunity to be examined and treated at their doorsteps. Thus poor & working women can save the time & money required for taking treatment from the government or private health care centres

located mainly at urban levels. The team also brings awareness to the families on health & hygiene issues on a regular basis. On average 50 patients benefit from this per month, most of whom are women and children, as they usually remain untreated with limited family financial resources. During the pandemic period, COVID-19 people received special health care support including awareness of COVID-19 in practicing the safety measures and safety materials like face masks and hand sanitizers.

The women who received agricultural training at the beginning of the project have been continuing to receive hands-on training and technical support from the project staff to successfully implement their kitchen-gardening activities where they grow vegetables for their own consumption and by following organic farming practices. By selling the surplus the women are also earning some extra income that contributes to their economic empowerment as well.

As the early marriage of girls is still an immense problem in the villages, 46 girls received school sponsorship support during the reporting period so that they can continue their studies. At the same time, MATI started to work with the surrounding schools and a team of social workers is now active in educating students on the bad impacts of early marriage, dowry, eve-teasing, drug addiction etc. through the school awareness program.

During the reporting period only 15,000 saplings of different fruits, timbers and medicinal trees were distributed to the students against the target of 15,000 saplings for planting in the surrounding villages and roadsides, canal sides and the premises of schools and other institutions for environmental protection and climate change mitigation.