

Women: A Driving Force for Urban Resilience A Photo- documentation of comprehensive disaster risk reduction approach towards urban resilience 2017

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osne Ara. a 30 year old bricklayer. She came to Gazipur in search of a better life years back. Living in a seventy square feet accommodation with another seven family members, she faced all odds possible in a life.

As CARE Bangladesh's 'Building Resilience of the Urban Poor' (BRUP) initiative started in the slum where she lived in 2015, she joined the groups with apprehension and hesitation. And yet, in last few years, she rediscovered the meaning of trust, social cohesion, the value of unity and the need to speak out. She is now a symbol of resilience in her neighbourhood.

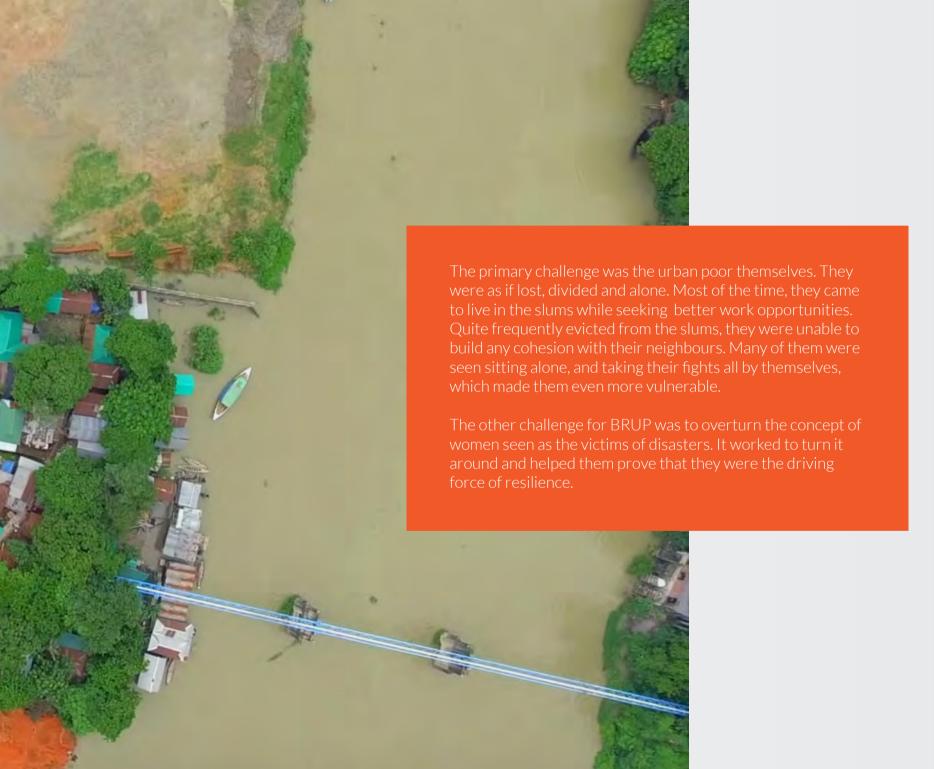
This book tells the stories of Hosne Ara and another 2000 women like her. These women learnt the meaning of being organized and the value of savings. They have set up small enterprises. They learnt how better planning and the implementation of small but meaningful infrastructures can make neighbourhoods safer. Their initiatives ensured running water at the

doorsteps, sanitary latrine near the houses. Many of them work as the 'Registered primary respondent' for the Fire brigade to fight hazards like fire or building collapse. These confident women now are widely connected to the government and relevant institutions. Now they are not afraid to take up any challenge.

This is their story. Story of the women from slums who are at the centre of resilience building in an urban context. About 8000 people live in six slums in Gazipur where BRUP worked. Poor infrastructure, unhealthy living condition could not stop the residents from coming here for a better life. Thousands of them thrive industries nearby. The women living here are among the most resilient people around. CARE Bangladesh's BRUP initiative started to work on resilience building with 2000 thousand women and children of them in 2015.













Slums in Gazipur offer abysmal quality of life to its residents. Houses do not have sanitary latrine or water supply; makeshift tin shed houses are erected on low lying lands or water-bodies.

Children often (far left) play on the bamboo made narrow alleys risking falling off - which is not uncommon; while, garbage is dumped (top left) from all over the places near the slum, causing serious health concern.

Houses built on the bank of Bangshai river (bottom left)) accommodate around one thousand people. Mostly tin shed houses without any basic facility.

Residents clean their belongings in the open using dirty water.

An intense work for three years in the slums resulted in fantastic outcomes.

The emergence of financially resilient women is just one of them.

Forty five year old 'Khairunnesa' is seen serving tea in her shop (right).

With financial support from BRUP 300 women like her are now financially resilient, running small businesses like grocery store, tailor shop, beauty parlor, vegetable shop, and small restaurant.







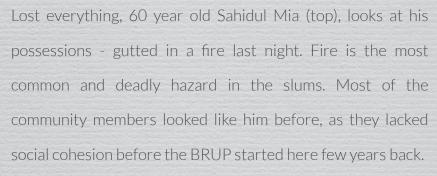
Many families lost their savings that they kept under the pillows in a fire. Since this mode of savings is a big risk, women in the community lobbied with the banks for easier access. BRUP then worked with some local banks to come to the communities for convenient banking procedure. They opened accounts free of cost account with simplified banking formalities. Now 300 support receivers have bank accounts in nearby branches.

Jhorna, 30, maintains a savings scheme in the bank and is seen depositing monthly savings installment (bottom left).

Regular savings has helped my family to start many things afresh. Now we can plan for a better future for our children

-Jhorna







30 year old factory worker, Sabur is seen walking past (top) the debris piled all over the places in a slum. Living in rampant pollution from garbage and fire caused from cotton godowns are day to day realities for Sabur and residents like him.



Residents of Uttar Tetultola slum are working together to rebuild houses - gutted earlier. They volunteered to help each other in building their dwelling places, a wonderful sign of trust and support – the core of social cohesion. They mobilized all materials from the local government as well.





Parul is seen carrying the relief she received. Another **108** families from the community received it too.





Risking lives, the fearless women volunteers running rescue operation in the Tampaco Foils factory fire in 2015. About two hundred women and men like them received firefighting trainings under BRUP and all are 'Registered first respondent'.



Many thought clean community is something for the rich neighbourhoods. But we changed the idea and led the cleaning drive in our slums.

Says thirty Eight years old Rejia, who is leading the 'Cleaning Day' event.

Besides everyday cleaning of the garbage, the community undertakes 'Cleaning' campaign in every three months involving the community. (right) A slum dweller is taking her kitchen garbage to a designated bin (far right). 2000 women like her make clean slum drive a reality in Gazipur.





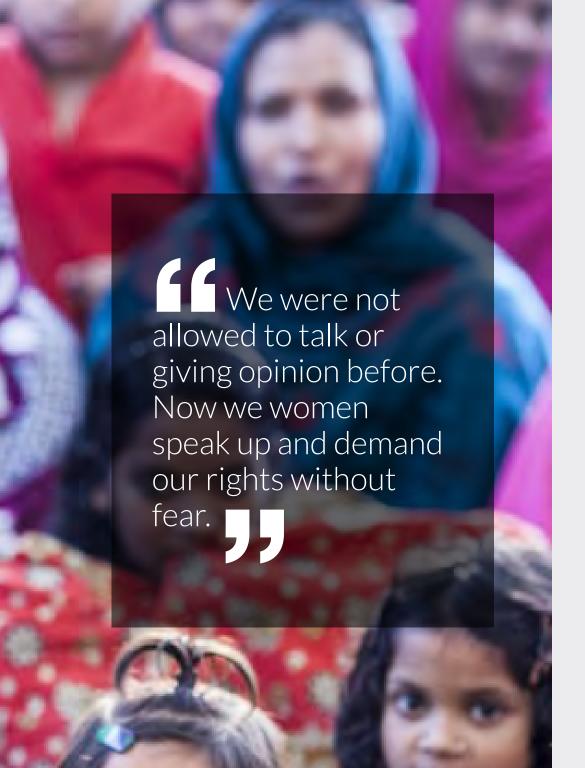






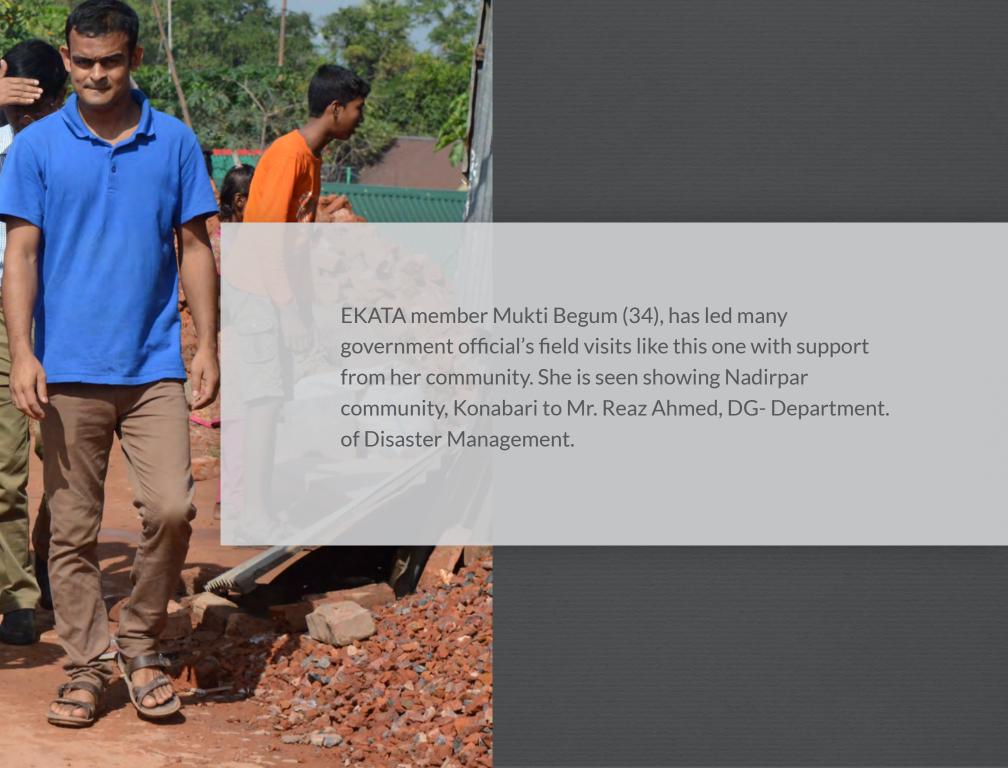
One key success of this resilience building work is the scaling up of the tested models by the local government. In one such case, the garbage management system is extended into 17 communities of Gazipur City Corporation.





BRUP is working to create safe environment both at home and in workplaces. The BRUP facilitated resilience building process has turned 2000 women into efficient disaster managers both at home and community. Their participation in various stages has strengthened different platforms.





BRUP worked to strengthen the institutional resilience of Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) by organising advanced trainings and giving them search and rescue equipment. Here, the FSCD professionals participates in a training organised by BRUP.







Community members provided climate smart solutions where climate change challenges are tougher. Transparent roofing for more sunlight (left), fuel efficient stove (right), solar bottle street lights are some of the innovative solutions promoted by them in their slums.





Community managed and constructed sanitary latrine and bathing facility with running water - separate for men and women.

Not a small feat by any standard.
Communities planned and executed the construction of 24 facilities like these around the slums with support from BRUP

initiative.





Safe drinking water at doorsteps (right) is one key aspect of quality life and physical resilience. And yet, safe drinking water at doorsteps is a high value service. Now 3,200 people living in slums enjoy safe drinking water at an affordable costs in their houses from overhead tank, connected with pipelines. Led by women, the slum dwellers started this process with the identification of issue.

PADMA

They also installed built-in fire hydrant to fight incidents of fire in the community (bottom).



The water in the line is pure and sweet. We don't have to be in long queues anymore to collect water. Such a big relief!





Physical resilience ensures infrastructure with access for all. Community women with support from BRUP, planned instructures (top left) like the construction of stair with steel railings in the communities. This helps people from all ages and persons with disablities. The same place before the construction. (top right)

Women in the communities expanded the information centers into resources centers where they wanted to ensure various services under a single roof. Health workers from Smiling Sun, Marie Stopes and Bondhu Foundation now come to these centers to support them.

This was possible as the women lobbied with these organizations and the local government in a number of joint workshops facilitated by BRUP. Residents of slums now get health services from here.





All the significantly visible community based work on resilience started with a strong, participatory planning process. BRUP facilitated community members to intensely engage in the process that helped them bond well too.

With visuals and long meetings, they identified the risks and hazards affecting them. The members then used customized 'Urban Risk Assessment' tools and listed the initiatives needed to address risks and hazards.









To put women at the center of resilience building, BRUP introduced 'Gender Vulnerability Analysis'. The women are undertaking the analysis to understand their mobility and empowerment status. They undertook similar analysis to assess their progress periodically.

BRUP had put '[Participatory Community Reflection' system in place. The women in the community are using this to check the strength of their platform and committee. It also assesses their leadership status.

BRUP worked to transform women from perceived 'worst victims' of disasters to the 'force of resilience'. It used EKATA approach to build community cohesion, facilitated access to services and created spaces for women to make decision.

EKATA Facilitator **Mitu**, 21 (right) is using learning tools to make her community understand the impact of hazards like garbage.

While the CDC Chairperson **Sufia**, 36, explains the need for social cohesion as a building block for resilience. (far right)











BRUP brought together children and women on a regular basis in the information centers to build cohesion amongst them. They played Hopscotch and Touch and Freeze, among many other things. These centers are also the places where people gather and talk about how to solve their problems.



Lack of cohesion amongst the residents is a major challenge in urban slums. As their stay in the slum quite often ends abruptly - due to sudden forced eviction, frequent change in their jobs, fire and flood hazards, they hardly have time to know each other. The basic fabric of society: communication and trust, is rarely created.

Women played key role to build cohesion, ownership of their area, and create bond among them. A pain-staking, time consuming, yet rewarding process made all happy and work together at the end.

Here in the picture (right), the community is celebrating community day and playing pillow passing in a picnic organized by them.



Shila (right) and Nurjahan (far right) – members of Urban Community Volunteers, work as the first line defence in the communities. A total of 600youth trained members like them are extended force of FSCD. They also have basic search and rescue equipment with them.

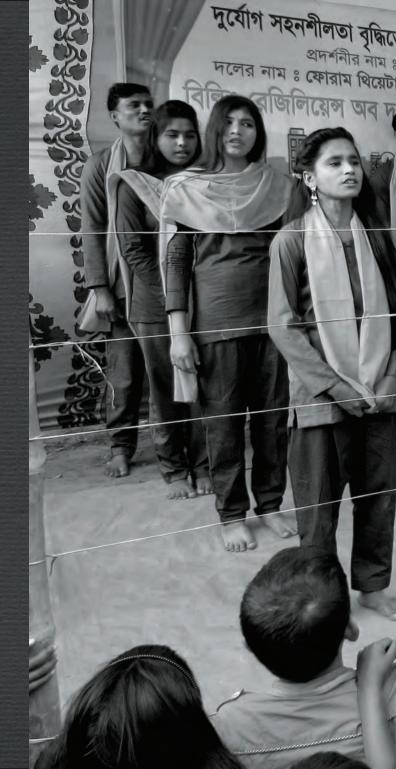
Many of them played significant role, thus hailed by the national and international media for their effort to recue victims.





Together we stand to overcome the challenge of shocks and stresses and remain vigilant to fight themto be resilient."

Chant the children of the slum who are staging a play on the impact of climate change on urban lives. BRUP facilitated a number of plays by the children in the process of the work for three years to raise awareness on fire, earthquake and environmental pollution along with some pressing social issues affecting resilience.





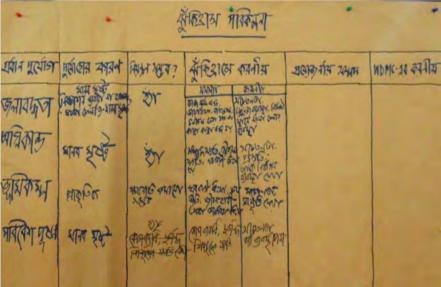


Gazipur is the heart of industrialization with many big industries located here. The risks of fire, building collapse, pollution are extremely high. So the community with support from BRUP, organized a number of seminars on the technical issues around these risks.

BRUP created a pool of experts with support from Housing and Building Research Institute, to build technical capacity on Safe Construction following Bangladesh National Building Code.







BRUP lobbied with the Gazipur City Corporation to scale up its successful community resilience practices in all of its 57 wards. The city corporation was keen to implement these practices in all of the wards.

It created Ward Disaster Management Committees (WDMC) and developed Risk Reduction Action Plans in each Ward.

The local government staff (far left) is seen working on a plan, and then presenting the plan in the plenary (bottom left), while an advocacy meeting is presided over by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Gazipur City Corporation (top left).





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