

## COVID-19 pandemic: Challenges facing working people in Bangladesh

The current situation of COVID-19 pandemic has caused most countries of the world to close their borders. The global supply chain has hence been severely impacted. The lockdown since March 26, 2020 has resulted in all establishments, including factories, closing, pushing millions of workers towards unemployment. This pandemic has also left most workers in the informal sector unemployed. The World Bank has stated that if this situation continues, the GDP growth will decrease significantly. Unlike China, Bangladesh's COVID-19 recovery rate is lower than the infection rate. The working people are suffering the most during this pandemic. ILO Director General Guy Ryder has taken the initiative to urgently hold discussions with the government, brands, buyers, factory owners, and trade union leaders to find a way to save the RMG industry. 12 percent of labour population consists of shop workers, amounting to around four million people. The shop owners' association has claimed that they are at a loss of 10.47 billion



RISDA arranged food packet distribution through Upazila Chairman & Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Saltha, Faridpur on 20 May, 2020

taka per month. These workers contribute 13 percent to country's GDP. These shop workers are not being benefitted by the labour law and hence cannot form trade unions. As a result, they are unable to assert their rights. After shop closures, these workers did not receive their salaries, and no one considered how these people and their families would get by during this time. Precise steps need to be taken to help these people. There are around 3.5 to four million construction workers in our country. According to government directives, these construction workers were supposed to receive their payments via digital transactions. Since these workers do not have any official papers, they have been facing myriads of problems to get their wages. Domestic workers have always been our most neglected population, which is more clearly proven at a time like this. Bangladesh has around 2.5 million domestic workers of all ages. There are currently two kinds of domestic workers in the country: permanent housekeepers and those who work in multiple houses throughout the day while living in their own places. This second kind of domestic worker is mostly left unemployed due to this lockdown. Since the general holiday across the country from March 26, around 10 million workers are sitting idle, including workers from all sorts of transportation facilities. Indeed, Bangladesh now has to deal with a three-dimensional crisis: health, economic and humanitarian. Attributing the surge in Covid-19 cases to increased public movement in the capital and elsewhere, experts warn that the country will see darker days ahead if the government fails to ensure physical distancing and make people follow the other health guidelines right away.



A woman stands amidst the debris of her house damaged by super cyclone Amphan in Satkhira on May 21, 2020.- AFP photo

## Super Cyclone Amphan leaves trail of devastation in Bangladesh

The Super Cyclone Amphan has left behind a trail of destruction in the country's coastal areas, affecting more than a million people in nine districts in Khulna and Barishal divisions on 20 May 2020 afternoon to 21 May morning. At least 27 people were killed so far and nearly 2.20 lakh houses damaged by the cyclone that swept through the south-western part with a wind speed of over 180 kilometres per hour. It destroyed standing crops, vegetables and fruits on 1.76 lakh hectares of land, uprooted millions of trees and damaged fish farms. More than 200 bridges and culverts were damaged in the coastal districts. According to a primary estimate, the cyclone caused damage worth around BDT 11 Billion. Also, around 100 villages were submerged as onrushing water breached protection embankments. Also, 7.5 kms of protection embankments were washed away at 84 points in 13 districts.

### KEY POINTS

Houses damaged completely **55,667**

House damaged partially **1.62 lakh**

Crop damage **1.49 lakh** hectares

Loss in fisheries sector **Tk 325cr**

Bridges, culverts damaged **200**

Embankments damaged **150km**

SOURCE: DISASTER MANAGEMENT MINISTRY

### COVID-19 Daily Updates

2 June 2020

[Bangladesh](#)

Cases	Recovery	Death
52,445	11,120	709

### Major Programmes of RISDA

- Humanitarian Response
- Skills Development (TVET)
- WASH
- Education
- Health
- Microfinance

## Appeal

We earnestly request to the donors to extend their cooperation to stand beside the helpless people in Bangladesh who are affected by CORONA-19 pandemic and Super Cyclone Amphan.



Mohammad Nuruzzaman  
Chairman,  
**RISDA**



Hemayet Hossain  
Executive Director  
**RISDA**



Distribution of Food packet in Faridpur Municipality

### Response from RISDA-Bangladesh

RISDA-Bangladesh has formed a management team headed by the Executive Director immediate after the confirmation of first COVID-19 patient on 8 March 2020. The team maintain close contact with local administration, community leaders, donor agencies, NGOs/INGOs, Government departments and Ministries to realize situation, national and international policies and strategies to address the crisis. The team also review the day to day situation and undertake necessary steps to address the crisis along with the Government and donors.

The major activities are summarized as follows:

**Awareness Building :** RISDA has developed information and communication materials on COVID-19 precaution and treatment in local language following the guideline from World Health Organization and Government. ICT materials have been distributed among the staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Also, it has been widely circulated through different social media. RISDA organized briefing session for all staff at head office and branch offices to sensitize and building their capacity how to work during the pandemic with personal safety and security.

**Distribution of Cash:** M/s. Mohammad Nuruzzaman and Hemayet Hossain the Chairman and Executive Director of RISDA-Bangladesh distributed cash money among the extremely poor families in Mohammadpur area of Dhaka North City Corporation. They helped 410 families @ Tk.500 each who were suffering for not getting opportunity to work due to closure imposed by the Government.

**Distribution of Food Packet:** RISDA distributed Food packets among hairdressers, minority ethnic group and extremely poor families in Faridpur Municipality and Saltha upazila under Dhaka division. A total of 300 families were covered with 5 Kg Rice, 1 Kg Lintel, 1 Litre Cooking oil, 1 Kg Sugar, 2 Kg Potatoes, 1 Kg Semai (vermicelli), 1 Kg salt and 2 Pcs. Soap. The Upazila Parishad Chairman, Upazila Nirbahai Officer and RISDA officials attended during the distribution programme.

RISDA is doing all these welfare activities with it's own fund and some donations collected from individuals.

### Future Plan of RISDA-Bangladesh

RISDA-Bangladesh is performing their duties for well being of the helpless community who are severely affected by the CORONA-19 pandemic and Super Cyclone Amphan in Bangladesh with it's limited capacity. The organization is trying to mobilize more funds to continue the present services and it's expansion as much as possible.

#### You are most welcome to join with RISDA

RISDA always seeks cooperation and collaboration of others to achieve it's vision and mission. Without support of generous institutions/individual, it is quite impossible to achieve the objectives. In this view, RISDA-Bangladesh encourages you to involve in different ways:

**As a Donor:** Any individual or group or institution/organization, can express interest to develop a project, sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and fund to RISDA management to implement it. You can also donate to our DESTITUTE WELFARE FUND which has great impact on the lives of distressed people.

**As a Volunteer:** RISDA is always looking for volunteers. Volunteers come from local areas or abroad are encouraged to work with their skills or interests. They will be given necessary knowledge & orientation to perform the specific task.

**As a Promoter:** You can promote RISDA through different social media like [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Youtube](#) and [Flickr](#). If you like any of our project or activity, please share it to your family and friend circle. It will contribute to build a stronger network to combat the crisis.

**Make a Partnership:** RISDA-Bangladesh is using a collaborative approach in creating a private and public partnership model to address emerging humanitarian issues. To further its mission in the areas of health, nutrition, education, training, food security and emergency responses, we focus on and seek sponsorship funding from government, corporations, non-profits, non-governmental organizations, foundations and individuals.

### For more information, please contact:

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