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Financial Appeal

**In support to the victims of
the 2013 Rana Plaza disasters
– A Sewing Machine Can
Change the Fate of One
Affected Garment Workers**

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- News from around the world -

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On 24 April 2013 the first anniversary of Rana Plaza collapse has been observed by the different national and international organizations. It was the day when 8 storied building collapsed claiming 1138 garments workers of whom mostly are female garment workers in Savar near the capital city of Dhaka, Bangladesh. It was the incident which also left 2500 workers seriously injured and made about 1500 workers missing. It was the tragic incident in memory which extremely drew attention of the world communities. There was hardly any media that did not publicize the news of the incident in the world.

After the incident the role of the government around rescue operation was bitterly criticized by some quarters as the rescue equipments were very poor. Some are of the opinion that outside rescue team offered should be accepted that could have reduced the risk and death toll. Of course the position of the government appears to be as proof to tackle such difficult situation by its own capability.

Present situation in Rana Plaza Area

The people who lost their near and dears are coming to the Rana Plaza and finding out them under the debris and rubble of the building for their mind satisfaction. Their wails are disappearing in the sky.

The area basically is sealed not to allow anyone to go inside. Nevertheless, people are coming now and often then.

There is a booth named ‘Rana Plaza Claim Administration’ established in Savar where the people can complain for compensation but that is all.

Conversation on compensation

There is a lot of discussion on the issue of compensation to the families for dead and wounded. Various funds have been formed in this regard. There is a fund under the take-care of the Prime Minister of the country. It received BDT 127 Crores (One Crore = 10 millions) from the donation of the people. BDT 22 Crores have been used so far. The remaining 105 Crores still remain unused. An advocate sent 9 times legal notice for the explanation of the fund but failed to receive any clarity. Different types of international fund like Accord, Alliance, and Trust Fund are much vocal to take the responsibility of the affected workers and committed to giving compensation but they are giving just leap-service.

On 30 July was the biggest religious festival of Muslim people. The all Funds declared that they would give compensation at least 50% before the Eid and they made the list according. Unfortunately no workers received any compensation. It was just empty promise.

The High Court of the country spontaneously formed a High Level Committee to investigate the compensation issue of the affected workers. According to the recommendation of the committee the families of the dead and the workers disabled permanently would get BDT 1451300/-. Based on the type of injuries other workers would get BDT 150000 to BDT 750000. Indeed, different garments’ workers’ organization demanded BDT 4-5 millions for each family.

The struggle around the issue

Still it is a big issue in the country. The struggle is going on. The workers are very active in view of all other issues in relation to garments. Recently the garment workers made a very strong protest against Toba group whose owner is Delowar Hossain who is responsible for burning of 111 workers of Tasreen Fashion Garments in 2012.

Recently the Anti Corruption Bureau of the country wanted to exclude Sohel Rahana who is the main culprit of the Rana Plaza collapse by raising lame excuse that is not the owner of the building. The actual owner is his parents. Finally at the protest of different organizations as well as garments' workers' organizations ACC is bound to include him in the case charge sheet as main instigator and influential to make the incident happen.

Present condition of the affected workers

The present conditions of the affected worker are miserable. Immediately after the incident many sympathetic people came to seek their well-being. Now they are helpless. Even they cannot share their miseries and woes with others. Many of them left the city to live in the village where they came from. But there they became burden in the family and in society as they are dependent and have no job that could bring income for the family. Some workers, especially female workers tried to take job in different factories and in other types of institutions but they proved to be unfit because of physical disability. They lost their job.

There are some workers affected who took their lives as challenge. They don't like to be defeated. They want to go forward with their limitation. They decided to be self-employed. They need to get tools which they resort to improving and overcoming the situation they are facing.

Some experiences

Bangladesh Krishok Federation (BKF) is a grass-root based peasants' organization with memberships of 2 million across the country. It has also the members in the garment sector who are hailing from the village. Many of its members are affected due to Rana Plaza collapse. Based on that obligation immediately after the collapse of the building BKF took initiative to stand by the affected people regardless its members. It tried to mobilize funding from the city middle class families and also from the international sympathizers. BKF's response to the Rana Plaza was very effective. The beneficiaries were able to use the support for their immediate purposes. Later BKF with the help of urban young activists provided some sewing machines amongst the disabled workers who were rejected from different factories and institutions. Now they are doing well with machines. They can make their daily living. It has brought little solvency in their families as they are regularly getting order for manufacturing of different cloths.

Bangladesh Krishok Federation is affiliated with La Via Campesina, an international network of peasants' organizations which is playing an very important role for the benefit small scale farmers and promoting the concept of food sovereignty and agro-ecological practices.

Action to be taken

Based on above experience BKF decided to step up this method which will be able to create self-employed works.

BKF identified 100 wounded workers in Rana Plaza collapse who want to take their disability as the challenge of life and stand on their own feet encountering all sorts of adversities. BKF decided to collect resources to buy 100 sewing machines for these people determined to get up. The cost of one Machine is BDT 5500/= . More BDT 500/= would be carrying and administrative cost. So the total cost for one sewing machine will stand at BTD 6000/= which is around 60 Euros.

Therefore for the purchase of 100 sewing machines for the distribution among 100 affected garments workers the amount is needed 60 EurosX100pers = 6000 Euros.

Appeal

Bangladesh Krishok Federation appeal to all our international friends and sympathizers to contribute to this small project which brings a real change with dignity in the fate of affected garment workers. It is much optimistic that international friend quarters/circle/periphery/individuals will donate to this project like before keeping in view the important contents of the scheme.

International solidarity: how to donate via ESSF

Cheques

cheques to ESSF in euros only, payable in France, to be sent to:

ESSF
2, rue Richard-Lenoir
93100 Montreuil
France

Bank Account:

Crédit lyonnais
Agence de la Croix-de-Chavaux (00525)
10 boulevard Chanzy
93100 Montreuil
France
ESSF, account number 445757C

International bank account details :
IBAN : FR85 3000 2005 2500 0044 5757 C12
BIC / SWIFT : CRLYFRPP
Account holder : ESSF

Through PayPal

You can send money through Paypal - please use the button on the upper left of the [ESSF](#) home page.

We will keep you informed through our website of the state of the permanent solidarity fund and how it is utilized.

[ESSF](#)