



Stichting Batashi: Five Year Plan 2023-2027

Introduction

Stichting Batashi is a Dutch foundation supporting small scale development initiatives in Bangladesh. The focus is on women, water and health. Batashi started in 2007, and started after five years with its first 5 Year Plan, making this our third 5 Year Plan. We will give an overview of the first 15 years. Then the assumptions and the plans for the next 5 years. But first why do we want to continue.

This is why:

- During the corona we learned the importance of washing hands and good sanitation.
- Teenage -girls told us how happy they are with the information on menstrual hygiene.
- One example: One of the girls in the programme, indicated in an evaluation form she indicated that she was harassed by her step-father. The trainers identified which girl it was, and discretely addressed the topic in a discussion. The girl felt encouraged and discussed the matter with her mother. The mother first did not believe her, but action was taken. The girl changed from a pale and quiet student into a happy young lady!

The first 15 years 2007- 2022

The Santeen initiative

From the beginning in 2007, till 2022, Batashi supported the Santeen initiative in Bangladesh. A low cost initiative with its base in Bangladesh and supporters around the world. This initiative was started by Sumita and Ainun. They developed an education programme to raise the awareness on health and hygiene for adolescents, in particular girls.

The education programme consists of a year long, bi-weekly (22) lessons of 1 hour, after school, addressing various health and hygiene related topics. The students are actively involved, using innovative teaching methods. Besides, school management and teachers are actively involved, and updated through quarterly meetings.

Initially 4 schools participated, slowly increasing to 8 schools, a madrasa and a young women's club in Dhaka. The schools are typical 'poorer' schools.

The programme evolved with small steps and activities where added through yearly pilots based on needs coming from teachers or pupils such as a counselling program, teacher training, and a workshop for parents. Also a pilot outside Dhaka in Noakhali, proved very useful, and showed the need for this information 'outside the city', in smaller cities and rural areas.

During this time, the topic of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) was given attention at the (inter)national level as well. In Bangladesh this means, that questions on the topic are nowadays featuring in the national end-of-year-exam questions. To great pleasure of the girls who participated in the program: they feel confident about the topic and have no hesitation to answer the questions!





In the period 2018-2022 we continued to support the Santeen initiative. In March 2020 the corona period started, and schools were closed for a long time. It showed how important hand washing was. At the same time it was a very difficult period for students (no school, no contact, forced at home, quite a number of students dropped out, as parents could not longer afford school fees) and school staff (some schools could not pay salaries). Sumita and team continued to make contact with students and schools, as much as possible, and we continued to support them. The Batashi team got skills in Zoom meetings and using various communication technologies. We had planned to hand over the programme to the schools, which we postponed till after corona. This proved difficult for schools. Handover was not happening exactly how the Board of Batashi envisaged it, though schools continue to stress the importance of the educational program. So we completed with the local Bangladesh team the programme of the Santeen Initiative in December 2022.



Financing 2007-2022

All Batashi activities were funded by donations of individuals or organisations, like church groups, foundations, and charities, mainly from the Netherlands. In the past 5 year period, all activities were done with a 10-15 thousand Euro budget per year. We got a financial stable situation, due to a large gift in 2020.

Assumptions for the next step

After having completed the 15 year Santeen project, it does not mean that there is no further work to be done. The education programme has proven to be a very effective and inspiring way to communicate the message on health and hygiene awareness to adolescents. Head masters and teachers from other schools have also requested for the program. Besides, one of the initiators moved to a small city - Cumilla. Because of the stable financial situation the Board has welcomed new initiatives from both Dhaka and Cumilla schools.

Plan for the coming 5 years (2023-2027)

We will stay focused on our mission: supporting small scale development initiatives in Bangladesh. With the focus on women, water and health. Besides the Dhaka and Cumilla initiatives, we have an annual small reservation to be open for small other initiatives.

Dhaka and Cumilla initiative

Both Sumita and Ainun have indicated that they would like to continue with the education program. Sumita engaged, together with a new volunteer Trina Chowdhury, in Cumilla with 3 schools. Ainun was invited at 3 new schools in Dhaka. She is supported by Liza. In 2023 we'll explore the situation and slowly build up the new programme. Yearly we welcome small pilots within the Dhaka and Cumilla initiatives.





Our focus will continue to be on raising awareness of health and hygiene for adolescents and we like to find new and effective ways to encourage students and teachers to use the education programme themselves and to continue transferring this vital information, also after completion of the lessons within the coming 5 years. We hope that with our education program we contribute to an open atmosphere to discuss health and hygiene awareness, and difficult and societal relevant topics for teenagers like early marriages and menstrual hygiene.

Financing 2023-2027

We like to continue to be a low cost initiative with a budget of 10 to 15 thousand euro per year, with its base in Bangladesh and its supporters anywhere in the world. We plan to continue taking inflation into account (8%) and we continue to use about 75% for the regular programme and 25% for the pilots.

We continue to raise money through donations, in the same way as during the last five year. These may be from family and friends, as well as from organizations that support our goals and way of working. We encourage longer term commitments of donors and are open for crowd funding possibilities. Each year we will carefully plan and manage our funds, like in the past 15 years we did continuously.

Communication

The communication with our partners in Bangladesh takes place through face to face contacts (as long as Cathariën as board member is regularly in Bangladesh), Skype meetings, phone and email. Our experience is that this works well, and we'll continue in the same way.

We reach out to our supporters through personal contact as well as through our newsletters (in Dutch), website, Facebook (in English), Instagram and annual report (in Dutch). Newsletters are sent 4 times a year. We are planning to continue the use of the Facebook page in the coming 5 years.

Organization

Board: Dieuke Joosten (chair, founder), Iris van Werven (secretary), Cathariën Terwisscha van Scheltinga (treasurer, founder).

In Bangladesh we work together with: Sumita Choudhury, Trina, Ainun and Liza.

The board does not receive any remuneration for their activities. Stichting Batashi has ANBI status.

Contact details: batashi.be and batashi@mail.com



In the picture, from left to right: Liza, Dieuke, Ainun, Sumita

Volunteers

In the coming five year we expect to continue involving young women as a volunteer, and in this way providing them internship possibilities.

In the Netherlands we are supported by a website manager and based on needs experienced, we will seek and welcome other volunteers.

