

1 NO POVERTY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



RECOVERY & ADVANCEMENT OF INFORMAL SECTOR EMPLOYMENT(RAISE)

Empower the people; Eradicate the poverty

To promote the recovery and growth of informal sector micro-enterprises while creating sustainable employment for COVID-affected individuals and low-income youth.

Major Activities

- 01 Organized Business Management and Entrepreneurs Development Training for low income youth and Microentrepreneurs.
- 02 Provide Loan on low interest, among 588 low income youth.
Selection of master craftsman and organized orientation session for them.
- 03 Organized Apprentices training for 6 months long on 21 different Trade.
- 04 Arrange Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Assessment for 12 apprentice. They Got certificate from National Skill Development Authority.
- 05 Prior Level Assessment has done for 130 apprentices & Refresher training arrange for 50 MCPs
- 06 Arrange Community Outreach Programme with 828 community people under Microfinance Branch.
- 07 Engaged 85 apprentice in different Job service.
- 08 Arrange Community Outreach Programme with 828 community people under Microfinance Branch.

Overview

The RAISE (Recovery & Advancement of Informal Sector Employment) Project, initiated by PKSF in February 2022 with support from the World Bank, focuses on strengthening micro-entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's urban and peri-urban informal sectors. The project addresses gaps in financial access, skills, and gender inclusion, particularly for COVID-affected individuals and low-income youth. By providing targeted training, financial support, and apprenticeship opportunities, RAISE aims to help micro-enterprises recover, build entrepreneurial capacity, and create sustainable employment pathways.

Specific Objectives

- 01 To Restore the Covid 19 affected micro-enterprise Business by developing capacities of Micro-entrepreneurs of urban and peri urban areas providing inclusive finance.
- 02 To enhance capacities and productivity of youth and young micro-entrepreneurs in the formal sector by developing their capacities and providing inclusive finance.
- 03 To engage youth from low income household in sustainable employment through apprenticeship program.

Achievements in FY 24-25

01

Training and Capacity Building

- Youth and Micro-**Entrepreneurs Trained: 588** participants aged 18-35 received BME training covering leadership, planning, accounting, monitoring, and market analysis.
- **Apprenticeship Training: 240** youths completed six-month hands-on training in trades like motor mechanics, ICT, mobile servicing, web design, food & beverage, and mechanized farming.

02

Skills Recognition

- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): 12 apprentices** assessed and certified by the National Skill Development Authority, validating their skills and enabling career advancement.
- **Master Craftsman Orientation: 20 master craftspeople** received orientation sessions to enhance mentoring and business skills.

03

Financial Support and Business Enhancement

- **Startup Capital Provided: 9 apprentices** received funds to launch businesses and pursue entrepreneurship.
- **Business Enhancement Loans: 12 master craftspeople** received low-interest loans to grow and strengthen their enterprises.

04

Outreach and Engagement

- Community Outreach & Psychometric Profiling: **828 individuals participated**, helping identify skills, interests, and employment opportunities.
- **Job Placement Support: 85 apprentices** engaged in various jobs, with 68% securing employment after training.

05

Continuous Learning

- **Refresher Training: 50 master craftspeople** received additional sessions to update skills and mentoring capabilities.

RAISE Loan Information

In this FY 24-25 **BDT 115851180** disbursed to **1114 borrower** under AGROSHAR-RAISE loan component

Inclusive Social & Environmental Impact

- **Empowerment of Youth and Micro-Entrepreneurs:** Training and financial support have enabled 588 young entrepreneurs to gain confidence, improve business management skills, and make independent economic decisions.
- **Enhanced Employability:** Apprenticeship programs for 240 youths have provided practical skills, resulting in 68% securing employment, reducing youth unemployment, and improving livelihoods.
- **Recognition and Validation of Skills:** Certification through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has formalized the skills of 12 apprentices, increasing their social and professional credibility.
- **Wide Reach and Gender Inclusion:** The RAISE project has benefited 3,389 individuals, of which 2,866 are women, demonstrating strong gender-inclusive outreach.
- **Community Development:** Outreach activities and psychometric profiling of 828 individuals have strengthened community networks, identified local talent, and encouraged collective participation in economic activities.
- **Job Creation and Sustainable Livelihoods:** Loans and startup capital have enabled beneficiaries to establish or expand businesses, generating employment and fostering self-reliance within communities.

Actions Taken to Overcome Challenges

- The PIU staff committed to extra effort and close monitoring to ensure smooth implementation of all activities.
- Apprentices were motivated and counseled to maintain attendance and complete training programs.
- Scheduling was adjusted where possible to reduce burden on beneficiaries, improving participation and retention.
- Strengthened communication and follow-up mechanisms to track progress and address issues promptly.



Major Challenges

- **Limited human resources:** The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) has only 4 staff members, making it difficult to manage and execute all activities efficiently.
- **Apprentice dropout:** Some apprentices left the program before completion, affecting training outcomes and project targets.
- **Time constraints:** Certain activities, such as extended training programs, can be challenging for beneficiaries to attend regularly due to personal or work commitments.
- **Coordination and logistics:** Managing multiple activities across urban and peri-urban areas posed challenges in scheduling, monitoring, and follow-up.

Lessons Learned

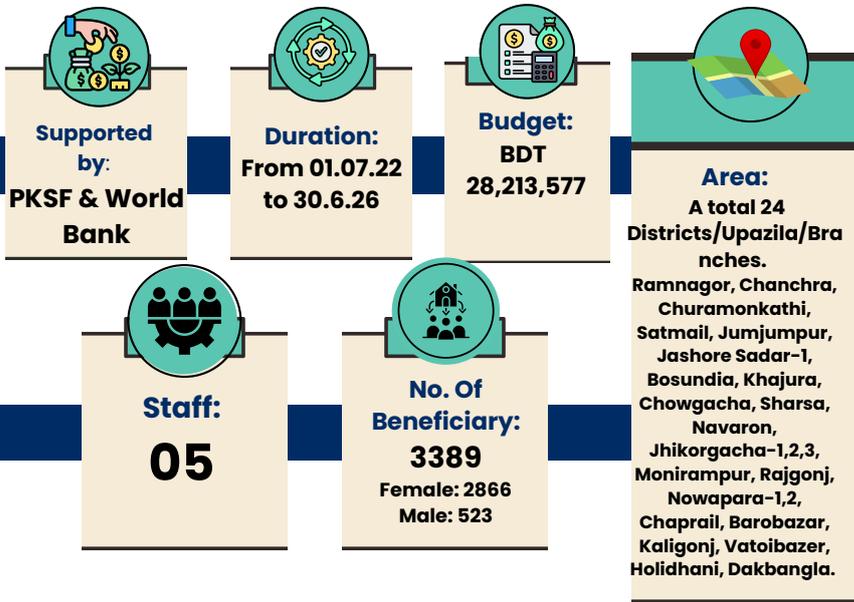
- Training duration should be reviewed and optimized to balance learning and participants' availability.
- Additional staff or volunteers could enhance implementation capacity, ensuring activities are delivered efficiently.
- Continuous mentoring and engagement of apprentices helps reduce dropout and increases skill absorption.
- Incorporating flexible training schedules and modular sessions can improve retention and completion rates.

Community Participation & Stakeholder Involvement

Community participation and stakeholder involvement are key to the success of the RAISE project. By actively engaging local residents, youth, micro-entrepreneurs, and partner organizations, the project ensures that activities meet real community needs.



Basic Information



Voice of Transformation

Sumon Majumdar of Rupdia village, Jashore, revived his family's wooden craftsmanship business after his father fell seriously ill. Forced to leave school, Sumon gained eight years of experience in other factories before restarting his father's enterprise with limited capital. Facing severe financial challenges, he received a low-interest loan of 2 lakh Taka and completed a 16-day Business Management training under the RAISE project.

With RRF's support and dedication to quality, Sumon secured a regular contract with PRAN-RFL and now employs seven local youths. His monthly sales reach 3-4 lakh Taka, yielding profits of 35-40 thousand Taka.



Having successfully repaid his first loan, he has taken a second loan of 3 lakh Taka to modernize his factory and expand employment opportunities. Sumon's journey exemplifies resilience, entrepreneurship, and the transformative impact of microfinanc