

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

ASTA FOUNDATION



ASTA Foundation
Cox's Bazar

Table of Content

Executive Summary	3
Goals and Objective of ASTA Foundation	3
Activity summary 2023	5
Support to primary school going students from underprivileged households in Cox's Bazar	6
- EID Cloth distribution 2023 - Educational Materials Distribution 2023	
Community awareness on social disorder	9
- Awareness Session on Human trafficking in Rohingya Camp - Awareness Session on Dengue in Rohingya Camp - Awareness Session on Climate Change in Maheshkhali Upazilla	
Building SMART YOUTH for Sustainable Development	13
- Speaking Skills development program through ASTA Language Club - Digital Literacy and Social Media Etiquette Courses under Building SMART Youth for sustainable development project	
Meeting & Other Program	
- Monthly Meeting among Member - Annual General Meeting - Get Together & Iftar Program'2023	
National & International Day Celebration	16
Milestone 2023	17
- Certification of Name from Social Welfare Department - Registered with the Youth Development Department (Reg. No: 087/2023) - Registered under the Societies Registration Act (RJSC) (Reg. No: CHS-693/2023). - Selected as Civil society organization for the project of Strengthening Social Cohesion and Civil Society in Cox's Bazar Project by United Purpose Bangladesh and IOM.	
Challenge and Way Forward	18
2024 Plan	18

Executive Summary

In 2023, ASTA Foundation made significant progress in fulfilling its mission of supporting underprivileged communities, especially through youth development, education, and social impact. The foundation's primary focus was on building capacity in the local youth, empowering women, and raising awareness on critical issues like human trafficking, climate change, and gender equality.

Key initiatives were successfully carried out, such as distributing Eid clothes and educational materials to underprivileged children, conducting impactful awareness sessions in various regions, and strengthening the capacity of youth through training and educational workshops. Despite facing challenges in fundraising and resource mobilization, ASTA Foundation continued to foster an environment of collaboration, resilience, and hope for marginalized communities in Cox's Bazar.

This report outlines ASTA Foundation's key activities, milestones, challenges, and the strategic plan for the upcoming years. With a continued focus on capacity building, advocacy, and community engagement, ASTA Foundation is poised to make even greater strides in 2024 and beyond.

Goals and Objective of ASTA Foundation

ASTA Foundation, established in 2019, is a youth-led organization based in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. The foundation is dedicated to empowering underprivileged communities, with a special focus on youth development and gender equality. ASTA's mission is to contribute to the creation of **"SMART YOUTH"** capable of driving sustainable development and to ensure economic security for vulnerable groups, including children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The foundation operates in diverse areas, including **education, capacity building, climate resilience, and economic empowerment**.

The core goals of ASTA Foundation are as follows:

1. **Youth Empowerment and Capacity Building**

ASTA Foundation believes in the transformative power of youth. The foundation works to equip young people with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities necessary for sustainable development. Through programs such as **vocational training, life skills development, and leadership programs**, ASTA aims to build a generation of youth who are not only skilled but also socially responsible and able to contribute to community development.

2. **Promoting Education for Underprivileged Children**

Education is a key pillar of ASTA's mission. The foundation strives to create equal opportunities for education among disadvantaged children, particularly orphans and those from marginalized communities. ASTA provides educational materials, supports school attendance, and works to reduce dropout rates by ensuring children from vulnerable households receive necessary academic resources.

3. **Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment**

Gender equality is fundamental to ASTA's operations. The foundation promotes **economic empowerment for women** through **skills development, entrepreneurship support, and awareness campaigns**. ASTA's initiatives aim to provide women with the resources and opportunities needed to achieve financial independence, contribute to their households, and actively participate in decision-making processes at both family and community levels.

4. **Community Resilience and Climate Change Adaptation**

Climate change poses significant risks, particularly for coastal areas like Cox's Bazar. ASTA

Foundation integrates **climate resilience** into its programs by focusing on environmental safeguarding, disaster risk management, and building the capacity of communities to adapt to climate change. The foundation aims to raise awareness about climate change, promote sustainable practices, and create **climate-resilient communities** through community-based actions.

5. **Humanitarian Aid and Relief to Vulnerable Groups**

ASTA Foundation is committed to providing **humanitarian aid** to the most vulnerable groups, including refugees, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The foundation's **emergency relief programs** focus on addressing immediate needs such as food security, healthcare, and shelter, particularly in times of crises such as natural disasters or socio-political unrest.

6. **Promoting Social Justice and Equity**

ASTA Foundation operates with a strong commitment to **social justice** and **equity**. The foundation advocates for the rights of marginalized groups and promotes inclusive growth. Through its policies and activities, ASTA seeks to eliminate discrimination, promote social inclusion, and ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background, have equal access to opportunities and resources.

7. **Strengthening Organizational Capacity and Partnerships**

To achieve its mission, ASTA Foundation continues to focus on strengthening its own organizational capacity and forging strategic partnerships with local, national, and international stakeholders. By collaborating with government bodies, donors, and civil society organizations, ASTA ensures the effective implementation of its programs and maximizes its impact.

These objectives are closely aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly in the areas of **quality education (SDG 4)**, **gender equality (SDG 5)**, **decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)**, and **climate action (SDG 13)**. With its strategic focus on youth, women, and vulnerable communities, ASTA Foundation is working towards creating an equitable, inclusive, and sustainable future for all.

Activity Summary 2023

SL	Activity	Location	Targeted Community	Participants	Description
1	EID Cloth Distribution 2023	Cox's Bazar Sadar, Maheshkhali, Kutubdia	Orphan Children	57 Orphan Children	Distributing Eid Clothes to orphan children to bring joy during Eid celebrations.
2	Educational Materials Distribution 2023	Cox's Bazar	Underprivileged Schoolchildren	200+ Schoolchildren	Providing educational materials like books, notebooks, and uniforms to underprivileged children.
3	Awareness Session on Human Trafficking in Rohingya Camp	Rohingya Camp, Cox's Bazar	Rohingya Refugees and Local Communities	1,000+ Refugees and Local Residents	Educating the community on the risks and prevention of human trafficking.
4	Awareness Session on Dengue in Rohingya Camp	Rohingya Camp, Cox's Bazar	Rohingya Refugees and Local Communities	1,000+ Refugees and Local Residents	Raising awareness on dengue prevention and the importance of cleanliness.
5	Digital Literacy and Social Media Etiquette Courses	ASTA Foundation Meeting Room	Youth and Community Members	150 Participants	Improving digital literacy and social media etiquette for youth and community members.
6	Speaking Skills Development Program through ASTA Language Club	ASTA Foundation Meeting Room	ASTA Foundation Members	80 Participants	Developing speaking and communication skills among youth members of ASTA Foundation.

SL	Activity	Location	Targeted Community	Participants	Description
7	Strengthening Social Cohesion and Civil Society Project	Cox's Bazar	ASTA Foundation	ASTA Foundation and 4 Other CSO organization of Cox's Bazar	This project focuses on several key areas, including organizational development, capacity strengthening, advocacy, and humanitarian assistance.
8	Monthly Meetings Among Members	ASTA Foundation Meeting Room	ASTA Foundation Members	ASTA Members (Ongoing)	Facilitating regular discussions and updates on foundation activities and community engagement.
9	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Cox's Bazar	ASTA Foundation Members	ASTA Members and Stakeholders	Bring together members for a yearly review, discussion, and team-building activities.
10	International & National Day Celebration	Cox's Bazar	General Public and Cultural Enthusiasts	General Public	Promoting the importance of the Bengali language through cultural performances and discussions.

Support to primary school going students from underprivileged households in Cox's Bazar

EID Cloth Distribution 2023

In the remote areas of Cox's Bazar there are some orphan children who are deprived of all government and private facilities. Some orphanage homes are in very rural areas, so many people can't send help there even if they want to. ASTA Foundation has taken the initiative to find and work for those orphaned children.

From the beginning, ASTA try to run some project every year for underprivileged orphanage in Cox's Bazar district. In continuation of this, in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and then in 2023, ASTA Foundation is trying to put a smile on the faces of all the orphans with ASTA's own funds. In the year 2023, ASTA Foundation has taken up the distribution program of Eid-ul-Fitr among orphans.

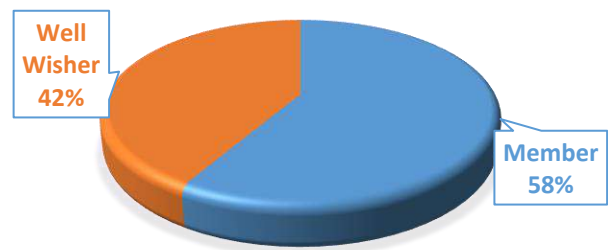
Beneficiary Selection Process



Fund raising

To implement certain project ASTA approach to its members and well-wisher for voluntary contribution. Specific committees are formed for each project implementation. The committee works independently for fund raising, beneficiary selection, procurement and distribution

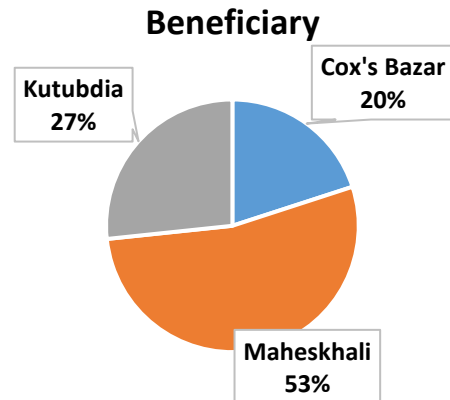
DONATION COLLECTION



Beneficiary

By beneficiary selection process there was three upazilla (Cox's Bazar Sadar, Maheshkhali & Kutubdia) were selected. From these three region there were selected 57 orphan from 3 region.

Area	#beneficiary
Cox's Bazar Sadar	15
Maheshkhali	40
Kutubdia	20
Total	75



Educational Materials Distribution 2023

The Educational Materials Distribution project in 2023 focused on providing essential academic resources to underprivileged children in Cox's Bazar. In line with ASTA Foundation's mission to improve access to education and reduce barriers to learning, this project aimed at ensuring that disadvantaged children had access to books, stationery, and uniforms to continue their education without interruption. Over 200 children from vulnerable families benefited from the distribution of these materials, which is aligned with the foundation's broader goal of promoting youth education and fostering sustainable development.

The project also reflects ASTA's dedication to the empowerment of women and children, especially through education. By providing these essential resources, ASTA Foundation worked towards reducing dropout rates and supporting academic achievement for children from marginalized backgrounds.

Activity:

- Areas have been selected for programme at two Upazilas:-
 1. Cox's Bazar Sadar
 2. Maheshkhali
- Targeting criteria have been finalized in consultation with relevant stakeholders
- Distributed to 190 among students from 11 school.

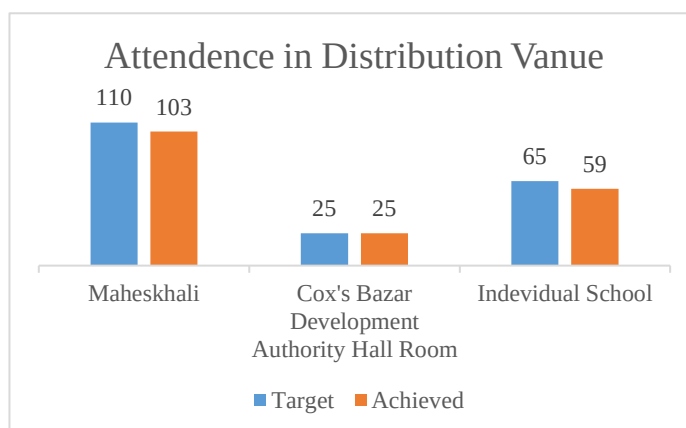
Catchment Area Beneficiary

Upazilla	Name of the School	Number of Beneficiaries	Remark
Maheshkhali	Modir Chora Govt. P. Scholl	15	
	Moduar Deil Govt. P. School	15	
	Moheshkhali Island High School	20	
	Fokiraghuna Govt. P. School	15	
	Boro Moheshkhali Boyes School & College	10	
	Jagiragona Govt. P. School	15	
	Bara Maheshkhali Girl's High School	20	
Cox's Bazar Sadar	Pahartoli Adorsho KG School	10	
	Peshkar Para Govt. P. School	20	
	Barmiz Govt. P. School	20	
	D Ward Govt. P. School	20	

Key Findings

1. Students Attendance

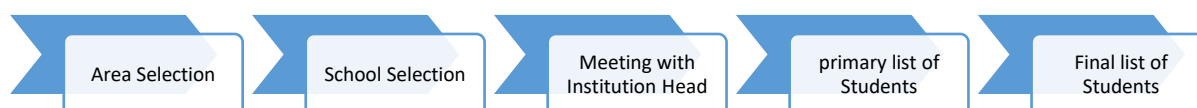
ASTA Foundation wanted all the shortlisted students to appear in the distribution venue. But in some cases few students could not physically attend venue. In these cases ASTA Foundation volunteer delivered the school bags to specific students by rechecking or verification through guardians or school teachers.



2. Selection Process

Beneficiary Selection was completed according below process. But here finding is

- Depend only institution head for selecting students.



3. Crowded Control

The volunteers of ASTA Foundation made a proper plan to control the crowd at the distribution point. But as there is no guardian or teacher with the small students, there is a little problem in taking seats, receiving bags and signing the master roll. Also, the duration of the program was long, so the students were a little impatient.

4. Waiting Time

There were many invited guests in the program. There was a little delay in starting the program on schedule due to the presence of all.

5. Sensitization

In this school bag distribution program among school children, ASTA Foundation try to sensitized the school students or other participants. Educating and raising awareness among the students and their parents or guardians about the importance of using a school bag and how to use it properly. but most of the students there were under age, they may not be well sensitized.

Community awareness on social disorder

Awareness Session on Human Trafficking in Rohingya Camp

The **Awareness Session on Human Trafficking** in the **Rohingya refugee camps** was designed to address the increasing vulnerability of refugees, particularly women and children, to human trafficking. Given the socio-political instability and the large refugee population in Cox's Bazar, this issue has been a major concern. In 2023, ASTA Foundation organized a series of awareness sessions to educate refugees and local community members about the risks of human trafficking, common tactics used by traffickers, and ways to protect themselves.

The sessions aimed to equip participants with the necessary knowledge to identify potential trafficking situations and report them to relevant authorities. The outreach was significant, with **over 1,000 refugees** and **local residents** participating in these programs. The initiative was aligned with ASTA's broader mission to empower vulnerable communities by promoting **social justice** and **human rights**, ensuring that refugees in the camps are aware of how to protect themselves and their families from exploitation.

Awareness Session on Dengue in Rohingya Camp

In response to the rising concerns about the **dengue fever** outbreak in Cox's Bazar, ASTA Foundation launched the **Awareness Session on Dengue** in the **Rohingya refugee camps**. The project was focused on educating both the refugee population and the local community about **dengue prevention, symptom identification**, and **cleanliness practices** to curb the spread of the disease. Given the dense population and challenging living conditions in the camps, the awareness session was critical in preventing a widespread health crisis.

ASTA Foundation's team provided valuable information on how to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds, the importance of using repellents, and how to recognize the symptoms of dengue. The project reached **over 1,000 participants**, equipping them with life-saving information on preventing the spread of dengue, which has been a major health concern in the region. This initiative was part of ASTA's continued effort to improve **health and well-being** and create **resilient communities** in disaster-prone areas.



Building SMART YOUTH for Sustainable Development

Digital Literacy and Social Media Etiquette Courses

The **Digital Literacy and Social Media Etiquette** courses, part of the "Building SMART Youth for Sustainable Development" project, focused on enhancing digital skills among youth and community members in Cox's Bazar. In 2023, ASTA Foundation launched these courses to empower participants with essential digital tools, including **internet safety**, **social media usage**, and **basic computer skills**. A total of **150 participants** enrolled in the courses, receiving hands-on training in tools like **Microsoft Office** and **social media platforms**. The initiative helped participants understand the importance of responsible online behavior and how to use digital tools for both personal and professional growth.

Speaking Skills Development Program through ASTA Language Club

The *Speaking Skills Development Program* is an initiative of ASTA Foundation, launched through the ASTA Language Club, aimed at enhancing the communication abilities of its members. In today's interconnected world, effective speaking skills are essential for personal and professional growth. Recognizing this need, ASTA Foundation has created a supportive environment where members can develop their English language proficiency, particularly in speaking, which is crucial for career advancement, leadership roles, and social impact.

Objective: The primary objective of this program is to make ASTA Foundation members proficient in the English language, focusing on improving their speaking skills. This will enable them to present themselves confidently in various settings, whether in professional interviews, public speaking events, or casual interactions. By cultivating strong speaking skills, ASTA aims to empower its members to become effective communicators and leaders in their communities.



Strengthening Social Cohesion and Civil Society Project

The "**Strengthening Social Cohesion and Civil Society in Cox's Bazar Project**" is a collaborative initiative between ASTA Foundation and United Purpose, funded by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two organizations aims to enhance social cohesion and strengthen civil society capacity within the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh.

This partnership focuses on several key areas, including organizational development, capacity strengthening, advocacy, and humanitarian assistance. ASTA Foundation will receive support to build its capacity in these multidimensional aspects, which will help improve its effectiveness in community development and social welfare.

The project involves close collaboration throughout its lifecycle, including assessment, training, program design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, ensuring that both organizations work in alignment with agreed contracts. This partnership is expected to contribute significantly to the resilience and empowerment of local communities, particularly in a region with a large refugee population and various socio-economic challenges.



Meeting & Other Program

Monthly Meeting

The *Monthly Meeting* is a cornerstone activity of ASTA Foundation, designed to foster communication, coordination, and collaboration among its members. These meetings are organized regularly, usually at the beginning of every month, and serve as a platform for reviewing the foundation's progress, addressing current issues, and planning future activities. It also provides an opportunity for members to engage in meaningful discussions, share updates, and brainstorm ideas for new initiatives.



The primary objective of the *Monthly Meeting* is to ensure effective communication and engagement within the organization, helping members stay aligned with the foundation's mission and goals. Through these meetings, ASTA Foundation aims to facilitate strategic decision-making, improve organizational efficiency, and enhance community involvement.

Annual General Meeting and Recreation

The *Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Recreation* event of ASTA Foundation, held in 2023, served as a significant occasion for reflection, team building, and planning for the future. The AGM provides a platform for members to evaluate the foundation's past performance, discuss challenges, celebrate successes, and set the agenda for the upcoming year. The event also incorporated a recreational aspect to strengthen bonds among members and offer a break from their usual duties, fostering a spirit of unity and relaxation.



Objective: The primary objective of the AGM is to ensure transparency, accountability, and member participation in the foundation's decision-making process. Additionally, the recreational activities aim to provide a relaxed and enjoyable environment, contributing to the mental well-being of members while encouraging teamwork and camaraderie.

Key Activities:

- **Executive Committee Elections:** One of the key highlights of the AGM was the election of the new Executive Committee for the term 2024-2025. This process, led by the Election Commissioner, involved voting by the foundation's members and was essential for the democratic governance of the organization.

- **Annual Reports and Financial Review:** The foundation's financial performance and achievements were reviewed, and members were provided with detailed reports on the projects and initiatives completed in the past year.
- **Strategic Planning Session:** The meeting also included a strategic planning session, where the team discussed goals for the upcoming year, identified areas for improvement, and outlined the major initiatives that will drive the foundation's work forward.
- **Recreation and Bonding Activities:** Following the formal session, a range of outdoor recreational activities were organized, including team-building games and sports. These activities helped to build stronger relationships and enhanced the sense of community among the members.
- **Cultural Events and Celebrations:** Cultural performances and group activities were held to celebrate the achievements of the past year, providing a platform for members to express their talents and enjoy a social, relaxed atmosphere.

The AGM and Recreation event was a resounding success, bringing together members in a spirit of unity and purpose. The newly elected committee received the full support of the members, ensuring a smooth transition into the next term. The event also strengthened the foundation's sense of community and motivated the members to continue their dedicated work in serving the underprivileged and driving positive change.

ASTA Foundation remains committed to ensuring transparency, effective governance, and a collaborative approach in all its endeavors, and the AGM and Recreation 2023 marked a milestone in the organization's journey toward greater impact in 2024 and beyond.



National & International Day Celebration

ASTA Foundation recognizes the importance of celebrating both national and international days as an integral part of its commitment to community engagement, cultural awareness, and advocacy. These celebrations provide an opportunity for the foundation to promote social values, raise awareness on key issues, and foster unity among its members and the broader community. By observing these significant days, ASTA Foundation aims to contribute to the collective understanding of various global and national causes while highlighting the importance of active participation in societal development.

The primary objective of celebrating national and international days is to honor the cultural, social, and historical significance of these events. Through these celebrations, ASTA Foundation seeks to engage its members, empower communities, and raise awareness about key issues, such as gender equality, human rights, environmental sustainability, and social justice.



Milestone 2023

2023 has been a year of significant progress for ASTA Foundation. The foundation reached several key milestones that have helped solidify its position as a key player in community development and youth empowerment in Cox's Bazar. These achievements are a testament to the foundation's continued commitment to its mission and vision. Some of the key milestones in 2023 include:

1. Certification of Name from Social Welfare Department

In 2023, ASTA Foundation achieved official recognition from the **Directorate of Social Services, Government of Bangladesh**. This certification provided the foundation with a distinct identity and legal status, enabling it to expand its operations and access more funding opportunities. The certification was obtained in October, marking a major step in the foundation's development.

2. Registration with the Youth Development Department

ASTA Foundation successfully completed its registration with the **Youth Development Department** in 2023. This registration ensures that ASTA can officially carry out youth-focused programs and initiatives under the government's guidelines. The registration number for this achievement is **Reg. No: 087/2023**. This step helps enhance the foundation's credibility and capacity to work with youth in diverse development areas.

3. Registered under the Societies Registration Act (RJSC)

In addition to the Youth Development Department, ASTA Foundation also completed its registration under the **Societies Registration Act (RJSC)** in 2023, with registration number **CHS-693/2023**. This milestone further establishes ASTA Foundation as a legally recognized non-governmental organization (NGO), granting it the authority to operate across various sectors and collaborate with national and international partners.

4. Selection for Strengthening Social Cohesion and Civil Society Project

ASTA Foundation was selected as a **civil society organization** for the **Strengthening Social Cohesion and Civil Society** project in Cox's Bazar, funded by **United Purpose Bangladesh** and supported by **IOM (International Organization for Migration)**. This selection reflects the trust and confidence that national and international organizations have placed in ASTA to contribute to social cohesion, capacity-building, and youth development in Cox's Bazar.

Challenges and Way Forward

Challenges

1. **Lack of Financial Resources:** Limited funding affected the scale and sustainability of several programs, hindering the foundation's ability to expand and serve more communities.
2. **Limited Reach of Programs:** The geographical scope of initiatives was restricted, leaving some remote areas underserved due to logistical constraints.
3. **Difficulty in Measuring Impact:** Without a strong monitoring and evaluation system, it was challenging to assess the effectiveness and long-term impact of many programs.
4. **Registration Delays:** Bureaucratic delays in obtaining necessary registrations slowed down the foundation's operations and limited access to certain funding opportunities.
5. **Insufficient Office Facilities for Female Members:** The foundation faced challenges in providing adequate office facilities for female members, affecting their full participation in programs.

Way Forward:

ASTA Foundation plans to diversify funding sources, expand program reach, improve monitoring systems, streamline registration processes, and enhance facilities for female members to overcome these challenges.

Plan for 2024

- Expand volunteer and member network
- Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework
- Strengthen partnerships with local, national, and international organizations
- Increase transparency and accountability in reporting and financial management
- Develop a long-term sustainability plan with diversified funding sources
- Enhance capacity building initiatives for members and volunteers
- Focus on advocacy for marginalized communities, particularly in education, gender equality, and climate resilience

THE END