

Safety & Rights

Promoting Safety, Enforcing Rights

নিরাপত্তা Safety ভোক্তা অধিকার Transport
মজুরী স্বাস্থ্য Drugs
Wages Health কর্মঘণ্টা Consumer Safety
ঝুঁকি ক্ষতিপূরণ আইনী সহায়তা Hours of work
Hazards Litigation Advice Advocacy
গবেষণা Research পরামর্শ PIL এ্যাডভোকেসি
Training তথ্যানুসন্ধান Investigation জনস্বার্থে মামলা
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Who we are

What is Safety and Rights Society

Safety and Rights Society (SRS) is a local not-for-profit organisation, registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. We work to ensure the overall decent working conditions at the very least in compliance with the law. We also work toward ensuring public protection from unacceptable risks from the food, the goods they purchase, the transport they use, or the work undertaken by others

Who do we work with?

Apart from working with the government, employers' organisations and trade unions, we work with a number of NGOs including BRAC Human Rights and Legal Services Programme, Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust (BLAST) and the Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP).

Governance

Safety and Rights is governed by a seven member board. Members of the board are: Ms. Khushi Kabir (Chairperson), Ms. Tahera Yasmin (Vice-Chairperson), Dr. Wajedul Islam Khan, Ms. Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Ms. Asma Jahan Huque, Mr. Safi Rahman Khan (Treasurer), Mr. Tanim Hussain Shawon (General Secretary). The Executive Director of the organisation is Sekender Ali Mina.

What do we do?

Workplace Safety and Provision of Compensation

Our key programmes is concerned with improving the health and safety conditions faced by workers in Bangladesh and consequently ensuring appropriate compensation according to the law for the dependent families and injured workers following a workplace death and injury.

In absence of accurate data from any authoritative national body, we are informed by the past estimation of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) that over 11,000 workers suffer fatal accidents and a further 24,500 die from work related diseases across all sectors each year in Bangladesh. It is also estimated that a further 8 million workers suffer injuries at work – many of which result in permanent disability.

Although health and safety legislation exists in Bangladesh, compliance is low and state enforcement is minimal. It is often difficult for even the best employers to comply with the law as they have a lot to improve on understanding of their legal obligations. Workers and trade unions are often puzzled on their actions.

These factors have resulted in a rare case of receiving law provided compensation by concerned parties for workers who are injured or killed at work. State bodies rarely bring those to account who are accused of negligence resulting death or injury. As a result, the families of the injured and deceased worker can fall into poverty.

Investigation of workplace deaths and injuries: With our partner organisations, we investigate workplace deaths throughout Bangladesh to understand the causes and circumstances of these deaths, provide legal assistance to families in obtaining compensation and help the labour inspectorate in considering whether enforcement action is necessary.

Enforcement of the Law: We work with the Inspectorate of Factories and Establishments, and other related enforcement bodies to improve the enforcement of health and safety law. To that end, we undertake strategic public interest litigation in the High Court of Bangladesh and plan to provide legal assistance at workplace level to workers and trade unions.





Research: We conduct research to obtain a better understanding of the occupational health and safety situation in Bangladesh, including the numbers and circumstances of deaths and injuries and suggest necessary changes in workplace practices.

Working with Employers and trade unions: We work with employer's organisations to assist them to understand their health and safety obligations and the steps they need to take to fulfill them. We are producing guidance that can be used by individual employers to improve their workplaces and are developing training programmes on health and safety management. We also provide training to trade unions and workers on their rights under health and safety law.

Legal and Policy Reform: We are active to improve the existing health and safety law offering appropriate protection to workers. We are also pressing the government to implement National Occupational Health and Safety Policy 2013, properly equipped and functioning National Industrial Health and Safety Council and the Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation.

Public Safety

Extending the magnitude of assistance to the people who face risks to their health and safety, Safety and Rights work to improve the law and regulation of public safety issues. We assess the adequacy of the law intended to safeguard members of the public and consider whether concerned government bodies are properly carrying out their functions. In appeared cases of negligence to take relevant action, we file public interest cases.

General Workplace Conditions

The Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 set out detailed minimum conditions of work that employers should provide in relation to hours of work, minimum wage levels, the security of their employment, and the overall environment in which they work. Through, research, litigation, training and advocacy Safety and Rights is working to ensure that employers comply with their legal obligations in this area.

what we have done

In realizing compensation, SRS filed 198 cases before the Labour Courts in Bangladesh, provided technical support to 194 injured workers in realizing financial assistance from Bangladesh Labour Welfare Fund.

In Rana Plaza collapse SRS have assisted to the rescue process, provided medicine, and comfortable beds to the long-term patients, assisted in Rapid Need Assessment and in receiving claims for financial aid from the fund developed by ILO.



Conducted research/studies

For WHO - Occupational Safety and Health in the Construction Sector in Bangladesh;

For ILO - Extent of Compliance of Bangladesh Law and practice with ILO conventions relating to Occupational Safety and Health commissioned;

For Diakonia - CSR practice in Bangladesh;

For European Commission - Scope and Efficacy of Newly Formed TU in RMG Industries;

For Social Science Research Council of Planning Commission Bangladesh- Measuring Socio- Economic Impact of Workplace Serious Injuries in Bangladesh.

Translation of OSH Toolkit from English to Bengali developed and commissioned by ILO is another area of work that SRS has done.

Investigation into workplace deaths and injuries is another area of work where about 1400 incidents were investigated to get the idea about reason, consequences, compensation, legal action etc.

Through **training/orientation** we have reached 2600 construction, 1700 tannery and 5300 RMG workers. SRS has worked with Asia Foundation in providing **training to RMG** workers on labour rights in accordance national laws and regulations.

Our **health care service** to the stone crushing workers organized Health Camp at Patgramme in Lalmonirhat with the support of DIFE (Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishment).

Published Yearly Report on Workplace Deaths, The State of Labour and Labour Economy of Bangladesh, Construction Guidance on Health and Safety, Sramojeebir Adarshalipy (ABC for Working People), and Legal Briefing on OSH.

projects

1. "Workplace Safety, Compensation and Accountability" project funded by Diakonia (5 years from January 2016) focusing information gathering on workplace health and Safety and Advocacy and awareness with initiative to build capacity of organizations.
2. "Mainstreaming the UN Guiding Principle on Business and Human Rights in Bangladesh", funded by British High Commission (20 months from August 2016) with major focus to mainstreaming UN Guiding Principle on Business and Human Rights;
3. "Sustainable and Responsible Actions for Making Industries Care (SRAMIC)" funded by European Union, Levi Strauss Foundation and ActionAid (42 months from January 2016) with major focus to promote female leadership particularly in both trade union and Participation Committees.

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