

Change Thyself and then Change Organization
Annual Staff Conference of Bhola Region
25 February, 2017

The Annual staff conference of Bhola region (Core Program) has been started at 9.00 am with the national anthem on 25th February 2017 and with a motivational speech- Aim should be same both for oneself and the organization.

The Director of COAST Trust presented the vision, mission and the future plan of 2017 to all COAST staff. While discussing about values, he said, COAST has always been with the poorest and it will remain beside them for the benefits of rural development and for changing of their life patterns. At present COAST is implementing its activities in seven districts of coastal area. COAST believes in same dignity from CDO to Executive Director. Initially, the ratio of salaries of CDO to Executive Director was 1:12. At present, it has been reduced to 1:8. COAST plans to further reduce it in the future.

During open discussion, the Executive Director shared the organizational future plan. Here he said, the field staffs are now getting a smaller amount of medical bill. He committed that it will be reviewed very soon and will be increased. Besides he said, “we intend to open a regional center at Barisal and 6 branches for Microfinance will be started.’ He requested everyone to inform him if there is any suitable land. With the permission of the Government, we will convert this organization as a bank and therefore, we need to increase our capital. Within next five years, Paramedic will be provided at every Branch of microfinance and primary health care facilities will be ensured as well. We are going to give stipend for the meritorious and poor students from Bhola and outreach region. The DC and the local Member of Parliament (MP) will be invited and involved at the occasion. Our monitoring system has been developed to a standard level that’s why for the past couple of years our mistakes have whether declined to a notable level which is truly remarkable. It will be decided with great importance that if there is any opportunity of opening the FDR facility we will increase our DPS. Our installment scheme will remain same. We tried to start it on a monthly basis also but we failed to do it.

The total participants of the first day of the staff conference were 210. Among them women were 51 (33%). We need to increase the number of women staff to 50%. Here we have seen the proper mingling of MF staff from different upzilas of Bhola. The number of participants from different upzilas are: Bhola Sadar-7; charfassion-33; Lalmohon-49; Borhanuddin-12; Daulat Khan-14; Tazumuddin-7; Manpura-3 and 30 members from Patuakhali district and 3 participants from Barisal. No inhabitants from Lalmohon and Charfassion will be recruited as they have already filled up their quotas. Based on priority, recruitment procedures will be started from the inhabitants of other upzilas of Bhola and from Patuakhali. The recruitment test will be held at the naming places. We have to look at the number of Hindu staff. Right now the number is 26 which is 17% of the total. Now we have to raise this at 30%.

COAST is different from other NGOs in that sense that it is involved in various social activities and doing political or influential advocacy at national level. For example, COAST has regularly observed 21st February, 26th March, 16th December and 10th December, so that the upcoming generation will be able to adopt real patriotism and stay away from fundamentalism. We are bearing our nationality in our mind, we will get the good culture and prohibit the negative one. But we will maintain a unique cultural platform among us. We should believe in our religion and keep the country above all the other interests.

Religion will be secular. We will not impose religion on others. The ideology of liberation war will be spread within the new generation.

Social Media is an important as well as a strong medium to reveal the present status of someone. But as a COAST staff, firstly we have to fix our aim for using social media. We should be careful while using it. The director said, we can use facebook during office time but only when it comes to urgent matters- as example, if blood is needed or something like that. Before passing HSC examination we have to try to discourage our children to use smart phone. It was decided to give some smart phones at some branches experimentally.

Supervisors will be connected with the staff for better monitoring. Phone should be kept in silent mode at office hour.

At the session of COAST promises 2017, the Executive director and the director gave special emphasis on the 5 points. These are- brutally honest, ethically loyal, uncompromised discipline, unquestionable integrity and positive thinking.

After completing the session on protection from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse policy, it was decided that legal endowment fund will be utilized especially for rape, abduction, acid throwing and minority eviction. We need to work together to end child marriage. All the borrowers have to be sensitized on the issue of the bad impact of child marriage, the importance of using sanitary pad and taking iron tablet during menstruation.

Gender meeting will be held on quarterly basis with the COAST staff and yearly basis with the community paralegal. It will be moderated by Rashida Begum.

After the session of COAST values, each and every staff agreed that our existence is in favor of poor people. We have to take the suggestion from the field staff as they are the actual implementers. COAST believes that every human being took birth with the same intelligence and dignity. If they will get proper opportunities they can utilize it for the sake of the growth of the organization. We should be more frugal and savings oriented.

Supervisor should be like a mentor. So, s/he shouldn't misbehave with his/her subordinates. At the closing ceremony, the Executive Director uttered that admiration is harmful at some stages. But leadership should be handed over to someone or to take it by own initiatives. We have to change the present situation of branches immediately. It will not only work for the welfare of its staff but also utilize a position of its profit for welfare of common people. We have to rest better places where other's conducive work environment. But it wants to be big enough for influential advocacy. It will not work only for the welfare of its staff. COAST will utilize some percentages of its profit to the common people.