

M&S Bangladesh CSR activities

Introduction:

Marks & Spencer has always taken our responsibilities to customers, employees, partners, suppliers and local communities seriously. We have supported our local communities throughout our 136 year history, because we know that vibrant communities are essential for our success. Under our Plan A programme we focus on the issues that our customers and colleagues care about most- People, Product and Planet. That means supporting everyone working in our business and supply chain to belong and get on, sourcing all our products with care and ensuring nothing goes to waste, and making sure our actions today protect our planet for tomorrow.

As part of Plan A, Marks & Spencer has engaged with lots of social projects in Bangladesh. We run projects like:

- Disabled people employment project: Marks & Start with CRP,
- Health awareness initiative with CARE & GSK and digital health care solutions with MAYA,
- Women Empowerment project: GEAR (Gender Equality and Return) with IFC and WOW with DIFD,
- Wage Digitization project for garments workers.
- Social Dialogue and Vulnerable Supply Chain Facility OHS Intervention with ETI,
- Underprivileged children rights and health facilities ensuring in local communities through UNICEF project,
- Increased awareness of human rights through UNDP awareness project,
- WRAP fire safety training program and lots more.

Health initiative to combat COVID-19 crisis:

Improving the RMG workers' health awareness, access and practices through training program and other related services by HALOW+ (Health Access and Linkage Opportunities for Workers Plus) project, Marks & Spencer partnership with GSK and CARE trying to mitigate health crisis in RMG workers. The project has reached nearly 50,000 Readymade Garment (RMG) workers and 100,000 community people. After successfully implementation of HALOW+ project, M&S together with CARE Bangladesh would be focusing on the crisis occurring due to COVID-19 in Bangladesh through VSCF Project. This project will strengthen the urban primary health care system and GBV (Gender Based Violence) services for garment workers mainly female workers and people in the low-income communities.

M&S also engaged with ETI Vulnerable Supply Chain Facility OHS (Occupational Health & Safety) Intervention project funded by DFID to improve working conditions and access to healthcare as well as health information for workers in Bangladesh.

To limit the spread of Covid-19 and healthcare needs of thousands of RMG workers, Marks & Spencer engaged with MAYA digital healthcare services that's aiding the workers as well as reduce the health risk of urban poor populations working in the RMG sector at free of cost.

Women Empowerment:

M&S has taken initiative on Woman Leadership in RMG sector through GEAR (Gender Equality and Returns) Program partnership with ILO/IFC. The main objective of GEAR is to ease the path for women working in readymade garment (RMG) factories to progress into supervisory roles, thereby improving access to better jobs for women, contributing to increased line-level productivity and reducing gender imbalances at management level.

Work and Opportunities for Women (WOW) Project is another similar kind of initiative to boost women's leadership in Ready Made Garments sector in Bangladesh funded by DFID.

Disable People Empowerment:

Through Marks & Start project M&S has trained and employed more than 3000 physically challenged people in the supplying factories since 2006.

Donation during COVID-19 crisis:

M&S Bangladesh team has donated their one-day salary to a hospital for supporting them during Covid-19 crisis moment in Bangladesh. Also, M&S jointly with CARE distributed PPE for doctors and medical personnel, disposable masks and hand gloves, hand sanitizers, liquid soaps, soap bars, hand rubs, minipacks of Horlicks and disinfectant spray machines to the community.