

SHEEPA HAFIZA

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND
SOCIAL ANALYST

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Ms. Hafiza, a renowned and dedicated equality and rights advocate and a development practitioner. Ms. Hafiza is a multi-skill seasoned executive widely recognized for her experience as feminist policy analyst and whistleblower of equality and JUSTICE, especially focused on Human Rights, Gender Justice & inclusiveness, Extreme Poverty reduction, Safe & dignified Labour Migration, and Young people's engagement. Ms. Hafiza has hands-on expertise on large scale organisational change management, capacity & social inclusion, strengthening and safeguarding expertise against discriminations, sexual and other abuses, .

She has attained successful stories and with her widely acclaimed creativity and innovations in policy advocacy and alliance building to address Extreme poverty (2003-2011), Malaria & Tuberculosis, Child Marriage, Safe and dignified Migration (2006-2016) , Gender based violence (1992-till date), Sexual Harassment at public places (2007-2017), displaced Rohingya population.

As the **founding Director of Human Resources** – HR of BRAC (2005-2008) transformed the Personnel Unit into an hub of Human Resources of excellence with principles of equality, transparency and justice. Developed the first **digitalized Human Resources Management System (automation)** to make an accessible HR services to all levels, also developed high standard Performance Management System, initiated online based large numbers recruitment system, set up first complaint redressal system for complaints for both financial ambiguities and sexual harassment. With her innovation & initiative BRAC developed **safeguarding policies** & implemented to enforce **zero-tolerance approach to fight Sexual & other abuses**. Supported many other NGO/CSOs , INGOs and Agencies in policy development and in implementations. Under her leadership of BRAC Human Resources Division - HR BRAC achieved world's no. 1 position for the best NGO in continuing stii 2022.

She was the first Bangladeshi lead for the combined HR and Gender sector for CARE Bangladesh (2001-2003), was a pioneer to **mainstream gender equality in strategic HR management** and staff development. She conducted the first **Gender Audit** and help in implementation of every recommendation effectively. She was one of the pioneers to transform CARE'B from a service-oriented INGO to a rights and equality based one. Ms. Hafiza also led the very challenging as well as most creative **Management Development Programme - MDP** in order to create women leadership from within, was highly appreciated and acknowledged by the leadership of CARE'B and USA even after years.

She is a born whistleblower, started working for **engendering organizations** from 1991 & fight against sexual harassment and abuse at organizations from 1997. Ms. Hafiza's lifelong movement is to continue improving space creation and enabling conditions & positions of disadvantaged people, especially women. In Bangladesh she pioneered and was the founding **Chair of high level Redressal Committee on Sexual Harassment (2005 - 2009)**, The principles later surfaced by the Supreme Court Division declared direction of 2009 to institute Sexual Harassment Complaint Committee in all institutions.

As Founding **Director of Gender Justice & Diversity - GJD** (2005-2016), started working on gender and organizational change from 1991, initiated nation's most extensive & all-inclusive Gender Quality Action Learning

(GQAL)¹ **programme** with the managers & staff members (20 thousand) **for engendering organizations** and later evolved as **a social norm change movement against domestic violence**, another innovation is **Safe Citizenship for Girls - Meyeder Jonno Nirapod Nagorikotto – MEJNIN** (2009-2016), the most all-embracing programme to **redress Sexual Harassment at public places in order to reduce drop out of girls from schools** involving largest numbers of students, girls & boys (40%), teachers, school management committee – SMC, Communities, media, Law enforcing authorities, local Government as change agents. The inspired citizens of each districts taken ownership of the movement and initiated 18 **District Sexual Harassment Elimination Network** and sustained the movement with local initiatives long after the project period ended. She launched the **first ever interactive App ‘Maya Apa’** to provide counselling & advice issues related to **gender justice and sexuality and reproductive health rights – SRHR** issues with technical support of *Mayalogy*.

Ms. Hafiza was the **founding Chair of the Girls Not Brides – GNB Alliance, Bangladesh** (2012-2016), which is a sustained network, now run under leadership of other alliance members.

Ms. Hafiza lead the **gender Audit** of CARE Bangladesh in 2002 and BRAC gender Audit in 1993, she also developed the Gender strategy of BRAC in 2015.

BRAC She has developed and conducted probably the first ever **gender awareness and analysis training course - GAAC** in 1993 for the leaders and managers -both women & men- of CSOs, INGOs and the Government officials. She had hands on experience to develop, lead and facilitate training on gender, sexual harassment, Gender based violence, Inclusiveness and Sexuality & Reproductive health rights, for Grassroots community groups, Entrepreneurs, Managers & Leaders of CSOs, HROs INGOs, Government officials, Foreign offices Diplomates, students of Schools & Universities, etc at national and international levels.

Initiated human resources policy & procedures, gender policy, sexual harassment elimination policy, gender mainstreaming guideline and framework, gender strategy, gender indicators for performance assessment, forums for free flow of communications as *‘mon khule kotha bola’* for BRAC, CARE Bangladesh, ICDDRDB and many more organizations

Perform as **visiting scholar** in various institutions of Bangladesh, teaches engendering organizational change management and inclusion at the Graduate School of SIT, Vermont, & George Washington University, USA

Sheepa Hafiza led one of the **most successful national Policy advocacy** for BRAC’s signature programme of Ultra Poverty as the **founding Director of Advocacy and Social Communications** (2006-2011). Also with public health challenges, like Tuberculosis, Malaria etc. Co-facilitated 2 months long International Policy Advocacy course with the Graduate School of SIT, Vermont for the Master’s students from SIT and NGO/CSO leaders from Bangladesh in 2008. She was the visiting scholar of the Graduate School of SIT, Vermont , USA teaches policy advocacy for post graduate students.

As **Director of BRAC Training Division - oversee 22 large national training centers as well as 12 international Country Offices from Asia and Africa-** initiated smart budgeting, earned highest revenue, developed and retained largest number of women trainers pool and largest intake of participants from INGOs and GoB (2008-2009). Guided BRAC in strategic planning, capacity building and gender mainstreaming. Helped to set up BRAC’s first International office in Afghanistan,2002. .

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As the **founding Director of Award-winning Safe Migration Programme** (2011 – 2016) she effectively influenced the Government of Bangladesh to address rights and safety issues related to Labour Migrants seriously, large number of them are displaced due to climate changes. First ever largest project developed on migrant's rights to support potential and returnee migrants along with labour migrants abroad. Worked closely with the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare & Overseas Employment (MEW&OE) along with the World Bank. Few studies assigned on safe migration too, along with others with the University of California at Berkeley. Ms. Hafiza was the founding President (2010-2016) of the National Alliance for rights of Migrant's and their families of Bangladesh, which is still actively sustained under new leaderships. On behalf of civil society group Ms. Hafiza trained the diplomats of Bangladesh Embassies abroad on 'how gender identities and relationship matters at work place in order to improve effective services for the female migrants', 2021.

Ms. Hafiza become **the Executive Director of Ain O Salish Kendra – ASK (2017-2020)**, a very prestigious human rights resource center. ASK received many awards and appreciations for its groundbreaking work in protecting and promoting human rights during her tenure from 2017 to 2020. She submitted several informative alternative reports to UN and other regional hubs to represent human rights communities, initiated ground breaking activities to strengthened & connecting **human rights defenders** from all corners of the country, also started attracting young people as human rights defenders through enhancing knowledge, skill and attitude building. Worked very closely with National Human Rights Commission – NHRC & relevant ministries, submitted alternative CEDAW & Human Rights Reports to UN Committees and in Regional Alliances.

With her leadership ASK was one of the first organization to visit the displaced Rohingya's while they were to crossing the Myanmar border to enter in Bangladesh, provide immediate humanitarian support, did reporting and advocacy on the emergency preparedness and human rights education and actions. Jointly worked with Forum Asia www.forum-asia.org to do a fact-findings report (file:///C:/Users/hp/Downloads/Forum%20Asia-%20Rohingya-Bangladesh-Report-June2018.pdf).

Ms. Hafiza worked very closely with **ANNI** - Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Commission's, **MFA** – Migration Forum in Asia, **FORUM ASIA** - Asian forum for Human Rights and development, in writing status report for building strategies to uphold human rights. She was one of the member organizing committee of National Peace Conference, 2021, Dhaka.

She has created as founding members, as well as member of different **regional & national civil society networks and alliances** to realize equality, peace and dignity.

Her one more groundbreaking creation with the support of UNFPA was **ASTHA, 2018 – strengthening access to multi-Sectoral public services for Gender based violence – GBV** survivors in Bangladesh – the flagship project crafted movement with the community to protest against GBV and increase access of the vulnerable women & girl, who are at the risk or survivor of GBV to multi sectoral public services.

In addition, Ms. Hafiza's role as a two-time **Adviser of the UN Secretary General United Nation, New York**-especially as gender equality expert in **Peace Building Fund** had been widely acclaimed. She was the first ever Bangladeshi in this position.

Recent Engagement;

- 2022, Lead a Gender Analysis study of REECALL - Resilience through Economic Empowerment, Climate Adaptation, Leadership and Learning programme of OXFAM Bangladesh working with 14 partner NGOs.
- 2022, Team leader for the assessment of BELA - Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association;s project ‘Defending environmental rights and promoting justice ‘
- 2021, Bangladesh Lead for the multi country Research <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/03/measuring-womens-leadership-in-covid-19-responses-in-bangladesh>

Some Publications;

1. 2021; 22 October, The upward trend of rape and the sociocultural shape, Daily Banik Barta, National News Paper - NNP
2. 2021; 5th February, on **Home based life skill education** during COVID-19 for young people in Daily Star, NNP
3. 2001; 4th February, **On Extra Judiciary Killing culture & justice** Daily Shomokal NNP
4. 2020; **COVID 19 - No careless death – Prevention is possible** in Daily Star Daily Star
5. 2020, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY- **The many milestones of the women’s movement**
6. 2017; **A book - Advancing Gender Equality in Bangladesh: Twenty Years of BRAC’s Gender Equality Action Learning Programme** published from Routledge UK; <https://www.routledge.com/Advancing-Gender-Equality-in-Bangladesh-Twenty-Years-of-BRACs-Gender/Stuart-Rao-Kelleher-Hafiza-Miller-Begum/p/book/9781138720268>
7. 2016; **A book - Climate Resilient and Empowering Livelihoods for Women** - See more at <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/01/climate-resilient-and-empowering-livelihoods-for-women#sthash.5kwa7RPe.dpuf>
8. 2015; **A book**- Peer reviewed journal article on addressing **multiple dimensions of gender equality changes** : the experience of BRAC Gender Quality Action learning – GQAL program, Gender & Development, Series 23, Vol.II, <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/addressing-multiple-dimensions-of-gender-inequality-the-e>
9. 2012; Case study published on **Policy Advocacy in Confronting Power**, published by Kummerian Press, USA,
10. 2011; A comprehensive review was done on existing studies and research on **gender and disaster in Bangladesh**
11. 2007 - 2012; Developed **alternative CEDAW** reports as a part of civil society and participated in the UN meeting on CEDAW in January 2011 in Geneva
12. 2010; Publication on The Local **Government in Bangladesh: An analysis** from the perspective of Gender
13. **1998; Bringing about Change in Gender Relations** in BRAC, SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont, USA
14. **2019 - Some more write ups on human rights movements.**
<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/human-rights/sense-fear-prevails-1503025>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/building-modern-economy/protection-of-bangladesh-migrant-workers-rights-and-welfare-1536514> , <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/human-rights/crucial-stocktaking-1575850>

Awards received:

1. 2020, **Women of Inspiration Award 2020** by JCI Bangladesh
2. 2019, **Swiss Day Award** for the Human Rights Forum Bangladesh - HRFB
3. 2019, **Right based organization** for ASK by Bandhu Social Welfare Society, works with diverse gender
4. 2018, **Support Institution excellence** for ASK by UPL Bangladesh
5. 2015, **Best migration rights work** of BRAC, from the Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment – MoEWOE, Government of Bangladesh
5. 2011, **Best Practice Award for Gender norm change** Program of GQAL awarded jointly by UNITE, UNFPA and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs –MoWCA, Government of Bangladesh.
6. 2010, World award for **Communication for Sustainable Social Change** from the University of Massachusetts, USA on

sustainable social communication in areas of Ultra (extreme) Poverty and Public Health.

7. 2007-2008, **Other awards** on a. Proven **Gender Justice work for SOCIAL NORM change** by the National Daily Newspaper of Bangladesh, b. **Excellent performance in Human Development Management by HRDC**, c. **Contribution to gender work** From Fulkoli Foundation.

Academic Qualifications:

1. A certificate on Gender statistics from Institute of Gender Statistics, Stockholm, Sweden, 2019
2. Post Graduates in International and Intercultural Management, 1998, from SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont,
3. USA
4. Diploma in NGO Leadership and Management, 1997, Global partnership of BRAC Bangladesh, ORAP,
5. Zimbabwe and SIT Graduate Institute, USA
6. Master's in Public Administration, 1976, University of Dhaka
7. Honors in Public Administration, 1975, University of Dhaka