

## Empowerment of rural Bangladesh women

Since FY2011, Shiseido has been promoting the activity for rural Bangladesh women to improve their social status and support their success.

This activity is an initiative aiming to not only conduct business but also resolve the concerns and social issues of the women who live in the rural areas of Bangladesh by utilizing the know-how owned by Shiseido. In September 2015, the activity was selected as a model activity of the "Business Call to Action (BCtA)" led by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Shiseido is the first Asian cosmetics company to receive this recognition.



### Wish to support women and resolve social issues through the "power of beauty"

In order to achieve our mission "to inspire a life of beauty and culture", Shiseido has been promoting corporate activities for responding to social expectations and issues.

Since the "improvement in women's social status" has been pointed out as one of the recent international and social issues in addition to poverty and environmental issues, Shiseido signed "Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)" as one of the first Japanese companies.

Furthermore, we considered how we can contribute to the society by making use of the "power of beauty" which is based on Shiseido's research results, findings and technologies regarding makeup and beauty, that have been accumulated since the foundation of Shiseido, from both tangible and intangible aspects.

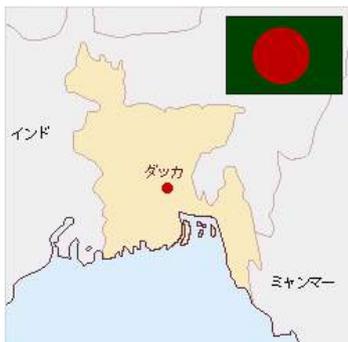
### Reason why Bangladesh was selected as this activity place

Compared with East Asia which has achieved a certain degree of growth even outside the urban areas and in which women's social status has been also improving, in South Asia, there are more emerging countries and many different types of issues including economic disparities, gender gap, etc.

Under such a situation, although many issues are related to health and hygiene, the rural Bangladesh women are highly aware of beauty and skincare. Therefore, with focus on this area, we were able to start our activity with the strong support from the local NGO, etc.

#### About Bangladesh (Excerpt from the website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan)

When Bangladesh became an independent country from Pakistan and established the national flag, it is said that Bangladesh used the Japanese national flag as a model. From that time, it has been a pro-Japanese country that has a feeling of friendship and admiration for Japan.



(Excerpt from the website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan)



Photo : Mika Tanimoto /JICA

## Start of "South Asia Social Business Project"

We implemented the in-house job challenge system for project members in 2010 and launched the "South Asia Social Business Project" in collaboration with research centers, production/procurement divisions, etc.

### Start from living together in the local site

In the first year, by living under the same roof with the families in the local rural area for a total of 4 months, the project members started from understanding their living conditions and customs as well as listening to the concerns and dreams that the rural women have.



Rural area of Bangladesh

From there, various issues caused due to their life, custom, etc. came in sight.

<p>Life/custom</p>	<p>Men have the right to make important decisions in the household (Family plan, divorce, working, household budget, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot feel confident about oneself</li> <li>• Not good at speaking in front of people</li> <li>• Cannot take actions voluntarily</li> </ul>
<p>Health/nutrition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dietary habit of taking plenty of sugar, oil and salt, and a lack of knowledge regarding the effect of this habit on health</li> <li>• Late night meal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unhealthy/sick due to biased nutrition</li> <li>• Skin troubles such as pimples</li> </ul>
<p>Hygiene/beauty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of correct hygiene and beauty knowledge (Hand washing, effect of UV rays on skin, etc.)</li> <li>• There are no cosmetics that Islamists can use without worries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unhealthy/sick due to unsanitary living practice</li> <li>• Skin aging caused due to a lack of appropriate skincare</li> </ul>

## Development of skincare products with Halal Certification\*

The project members, who lived with the rural women, had been thinking how to respond to the women's wishes to become beautiful, youthful and healthy, same wishes that even the Bangladesh women also have, by using Shiseido's technologies and know-how.



"Les DIVAS"

\* It means that the Halal Certification body approves that the target item is manufactured by using the ingredients and manufacturing process which are recognized as legal under the Muslim law and permitted to be used by Muslim.

Although there is no sufficient and correct beauty knowledge, the local women, who wish to become healthy, beautiful and youthful, are highly aware of beauty. Especially, they don't take any correct UV-ray protection measures in spite of the environment exposed to strong UV rays since suncare products are easily removed by sweat and water; therefore, their skins receive adverse impact from the environment and many women look older than their actual age.

In addition, many Bangladesh people are Muslim and there are not many products which comply with their strict rules (products with Halal Certification). We heard that many of the women said "I wish there were Halal-compliant products because I can use them without any worries".

Therefore, we achieved the development of the skincare product with Halal Certification "Les DIVAS".



"Les DIVAS"

- Cleansing foam: 1 type
- Moisturizing gel: 2 types
- Sunscreen: 1 type



Acquisition of Halal Certification  
Shiseido Vietnam Factory



We are reported that the women, who used this product, said "I can use it without any worries because it is Halal-compliant" and "My skin got soft".

## Development of original sunscreen technology from this activity

The local climate is not only with strong UV rays but also hot and humid. Regular suncare products are easily removed by sweat and water. This has been one of the concerns of the local women.

When researchers saw their situation, they felt the necessity of a sunscreen product with high UV-ray protection function which can maintain the effect even after sweating. Therefore, they turned their attention to the minerals and other components of water and sweat and succeeded in developing the original technology "WetForce" that provides enhanced protection against UV rays when in contact with sweat or water. This technology is currently utilized for sunscreen products\* which are sold all over the world.



Women using "Les DIVAS" sunscreen



Hearing by research members



"Perfect UV Protection N"

## Progress on workshops by local women (awareness-raising activity)

With "Les DIVAS" as the approach, we have been promoting educational activities such as workshop on health/beauty, and improving daily living habitats through the flip chart show which was created in the local language (Bengali). This is also an important initiative of this project. The workshops are led by local female salespersons who have received trainings.

Although this workshop started from a rural village, a total of 2,337 workshops were held in 16 villages in 2014, and a total of 27,547 people attended the workshops.

Many of the workshop participants and women, who used this product, became more proactive in getting involved with the society and other external environment by saying "I now like my skin", "The opportunities to go out on my own increased", and "I told other people that I feel happy because I could change my consciousness and behavior".



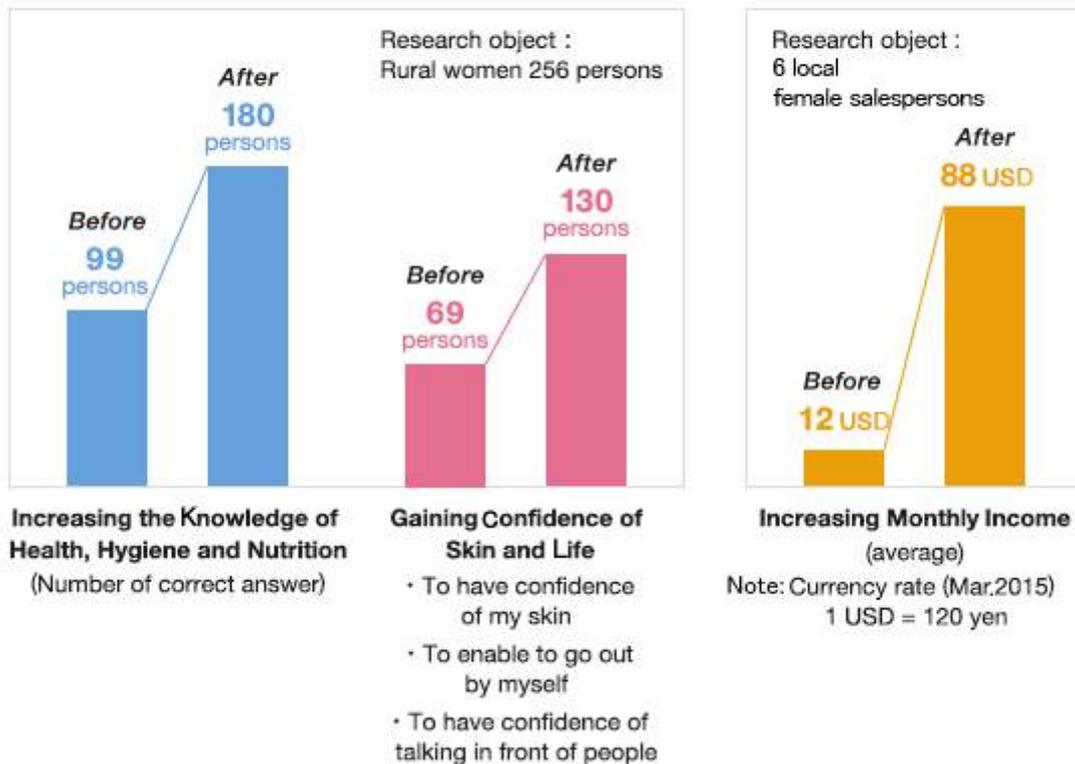
Flip chart show for awareness-raising activity (in Bengali)



Awareness-raising activity (workshop)

## Positive impact by this project in the rural villages in Bangladesh

(Period : Jan.2014 to Dec.2015 )



### Present activities

Since FY2015, we have been conducting awareness-raising activities for approximately 27,000 women working at the garment factories and female students in addition to the conventional activities in the rural areas. They provided the following opinions: "I understood the importance of facial cleansing by making foam", "I want to get more information to make my skin beautiful", and "I want to buy Les DIVAS immediately".

Shiseido will continue to accept the needs of local women and contribute to the resolution of local social issues and improvement in their quality of life.



Demonstration of making foam to female students by Shiseido's employee