

BRAC University and Sightsavers launch innovative youth disability project

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Staff Reporter: An innovative new research project looking into the challenges, hopes and aspirations of young people with disabilities in Bangladesh has been launched at Lake Castle in Dhaka on Tuesday.

The project, "British Academy Youth Futures Research", will capture the experiences of young people with disabilities living in urban and rural settings in Bangladesh. It will be led by a group of newly-appointed young peer researchers who have disabilities and will be trained and supported to shape national policy on disability inclusion.

Prof. Dr. Md. Golam Rabbani, Chairperson, Neuro-Developmental Disability Protection Trustee Board was the chief guest while Provas Chandra Roy, Director at National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons, and Shobnom Mustary, Deputy Director, Ministry of Social Welfare were the special guests at the event, which is hosted jointly by Sightsavers and BRAC James P. Grant School of Public Health.

Amrita Rejina Rozario, Country Director of Sightsavers Bangladesh, said: "We are delighted to have been able to launch this new research that will try to understand the experiences, aspirations, and challenges of youths with disability.

"The research will not only make a real difference to understanding the experience of young people with disabilities in Bangladesh but will also be led by the people who understand these experiences the best. By employing young researchers with disabilities," said Prof. Dr. Malabika Sarker from BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health who

chaired the event.

Speaking as the Chief Guest, Prof. Dr. Md. Golam Rabbani said, “Research is an important component for societal development and there is no alternative to research for development.” He hoped that this research, once complete, will help understand aspirations of youth with disabilities in relation to livelihoods and determine barriers in realising those aspirations.

This study will take the form of Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR). The project has employed young people with disabilities from Sirajganj, Gazipur and Narsingdi districts as co-researchers, and they will work alongside local and international researchers to gather and analyse data for the study.