

# Life Towards Light

Life Changing Story

**Child Safety Net Project**

Southern Bangladesh Region

World Vision Bangladesh

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## Message from National Director



I am grateful to my colleagues of the Child Safety Net Project for printing this storybook. It is great legacy for our Child Protection [CP] work in Bangladesh. World Vision implemented this project in greater Khulna in nine districts aiming to reduce children's vulnerability to trafficking, abuse and exploitation and increase rates of identification, rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration for the survivors. Through the CP initiatives of the Child Safety Net Project, we have reached 1.6 million beneficiaries over five years. The project followed four key approaches. First, we emphasized prevention of trafficking, early marriage, abuse, neglect and other forms of violence against children, and increased public understanding and awareness of trafficking issues; Second, we established a protection mechanism for the vulnerable children by engaging our potential partners- e.g., government agencies, NGOs, INGOs and private entities. Third, we assisted children and women survivors recover from the effects of trafficking through psychosocial supports and counseling, and reintegrated them to their families and communities with required livelihood supports. Finally, we engaged in advocacy with the government and different stakeholders, NGOs-INGOs high officials, public representatives and UN agencies, to ensure their supports to the project, and pursue necessary changes in relevant laws and policies, as well as implementation of anti-trafficking laws and policies.

Human Trafficking is one of the illicit crimes in the world. During implementation of the Child Safety Net Project, my colleagues saw in their fieldwork that children and women were trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labor, and the human organ business. Poverty, property loss by natural disaster, family break-up (divorce & polygamy), loss of traditional livelihood, the low social status of girls and women in families, lack of awareness and limited enforcement of laws were observed to be the main contributors to human trafficking issues.

Over the last five years, as the Child Safety Net Project has reached more than eight hundred thousand children. We have hundreds of impact stories to share with you. My project colleagues have clipped only a few of those stories into this storybook to give you some evidence of our efforts to reduce children's vulnerability. Child Safety Net Project colleagues interviewed trafficking survivors, checked relevant collaborating evidence, and newspaper clippings to authenticate these stories. All survivors who participated in this story book gave their written consent to WV to share their stories in order to protect other children from trafficking. To protect their identity, aliases are used, especially for female survivors.

Finally, I hope the attached stories help readers become more aware of the human trafficking situations in Bangladesh and helps youth girls/women to escape the traps of traffickers or pimps. In addition, I hope this storybook reflects our stronger coordination between like-minded partners and government to ensure the well-being of all children in the communities in which we work together. I congratulate the Child Safety Net Project colleagues for their hard work and the publishing of this storybook.

Thank you.

*Fred Witteveen*  
National Director  
World Vision Bangladesh



## Message from Regional Field Director



This is indeed a nice initiative that Child Safety Net project is going to publish the projects overall achievements & successes. World Vision Bangladesh has been covering a large area of Bangladesh working with good reputation that specially contributes to children wellbeing and social development with immense acceptance countrywide. Southern Bangladesh region is generally identified as a backward disaster prone area where natural calamities like cyclone, tidal surge, river erosions are the most problems in the area. On the other hand, the people of this area are worst victim of global warming and climate change. Massive salinity changes the livelihood pattern of this area. It makes them poorer to ultra-poor and makes the life of children more critically vulnerable. Scarcity of employment, lack of job creation, less industrialization compel poor community to live and somehow survive in slums and creating various social problem- trafficking is one of them. Besides, an adjacent unprotected country boarder area with India makes this community more vulnerable to trafficking. To solve these problems the Child Safety Net Project has been implemented here that played a vital role to protect, prevent, restore women and children from trafficking abuses and exploitation as well played special role to protect children through advocacy.

I firmly believe that this publication would present a diversified work of WV Bangladesh and create learning opportunities for all.

I extend my thanks to all who contributed to this special work.

**Atul Mrong**

Regional Field Director

Southern Bangladesh Region

**World Vision Bangladesh**

## Message from WVUS Program Management Officer



Dear World Vision Bangladesh, Community Members, Donors, and Friends.

What an honor it has been to support the World Vision Bangladesh "For Every Child" Child Safety Net Project!

Since 2012, I have observed with joy and respect as the project's diverse stakeholders worked together to prevent child trafficking in the Khulna Region, protect vulnerable children and families, and restore survivors to wholeness and hope.

The World Vision Bangladesh project team has labored with professionalism, faithfulness, and heartfelt compassion. Government leaders and community members have generously invested their time and talents. Families have bravely embraced children and loved ones in need of tender care. And child survivors have inspired us with their courage to persevere and heal.

It has been my privilege to serve as the project's US-based partner and advocate. On behalf of World Vision US and along with my colleagues at World Vision Hong Kong and World Vision Canada, I sincerely thank World Vision Bangladesh and all of the project stakeholders for creating a Child Safety Net for Khulna's vulnerable children.

Very sincerely,

**Laura Bramon**

Program Management Officer, International Programs Group, Private Funding,  
Child Development & Protection

**World Vision US**



## Acknowledgement



We are delighted for publishing these impact stories of some project beneficiaries among hundreds of such individual and families got support from Child Safety Net Project (CSNP). Project is going to be closed after making a positive change in the life of hundreds of vulnerable children affected by trafficking, abuses and exploitation.

I convey my special thanks to community people, families, children, beneficiaries, program participants and other GO/NGO stakeholders who have given their supports, and valuable time in implementing and making this project succeed.

I extend my sincere gratitude to my teammates who have given their highest efforts, talents and toughest hours for successful completion of this project and bringing these changes and hopes for the most vulnerable children.

I would like to extend my sincere & heartfelt thanks towards all the personages, specially the Regional and National Office Communication colleagues who have helped the project to collect and publish these impact stories earlier in WV websites and other media for exploring the project performances.

I am intentional to provide a big thanks to Mr. George Sarkar- Donor Relations Manager of WV Bangladesh for his special efforts to write the success stories from our different working fields for the donor communities and preparing this impact storybook.

I would like to take this opportunity to owe my thanks to my Supervisor, Regional Office and NO Colleagues and WVB management for their guidance, support and encouragement for this project and report preparation.

We are humbly grateful to all project donors, support countries, especially WVUS for their generosity, love and financial support for incurring these successes for most vulnerable Bangladeshi children.

At last, all credit goes to the Almighty God!

Sincerely,

**Provash Chandra Biswas**

Project Director

Child Safety Net Project

Southern Bangladesh Region

**World Vision Bangladesh**

## Introduction

Child Safety Net project is the first ever such initiative by World Vision Bangladesh to combat child trafficking in Southern part of Bangladesh. The project is a five-year initiative started in May 2011. World Vision Bangladesh has initiated the Child Safety Net Project (CSP) to reduce children's vulnerability and risk of trafficking by significantly increasing the awareness on child trafficking; promoting networking and coordination between stakeholders at all levels; strengthening the capacity of governmental and non-governmental agencies to rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate child victims of trafficking; and promoting a protective environment for children.

Prevention, protection and restoration are our main approaches to tackle this problem and advocacy is the integral part this initiative. We have achieved many successes through this project specially the positive changes in the life of the most vulnerable children victimized by trafficking and abuses and exploitation. This project has made significant changes during its endeavor in the vulnerable communities, families, children and child protection system to prevent and protect children from trafficking, abuses and exploitations. Community people, parents and caregivers are now more aware to protect children from trafficking, child marriage and other child abuses. Children in communities are raising their voices against human trafficking, child marriage and child abuses. Counter trafficking committees are now active and functional to act according for combating human trafficking. Positive and behavioral changes among the children of Child Friendly Spaces graduated are noticed and they are getting education in formal schools. A big number of survivors (153) of trafficking reintegrated to their families and communities and are dreaming with hope in their future life. Two trafficking survivors have been awarded as Joyeeta (abused women who lead normal life) as recognized by Bangladesh Government. Hundreds of Life Skill Peer Educators are being remaining in the communities as change agents and continue protecting themselves and aware their peers. Now, LEAs and relevant government agencies are more active and functional to combat trafficking and child abuses. A comparatively protective environment in the project area is existing. Project provided rehabilitation supports to the survivors and employment support to the vulnerable families to address the root causes to prevent trafficking, abuse and exploitation of children. There are lot of success stories in the life of vulnerable families and children. Those also have been published in WV's websites and other media. Here we are publishing those for our community people and key stakeholders to understand the project success and achievement and for the help of future programing and references.





## Briefing on World Vision

World Vision Bangladesh is an international non-profit, Christian humanitarian and development organization that seeks to create long lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities living in poverty and injustice through development, relief and rehabilitation program around the world. Dr. Bob Pierce, an American war correspondence, established the organization in 1950. He was touched by the grim situation of abandoned children in Seoul during the Korean War. After his return at home, he started to help the war afflicted children giving them hope for a better life and future. As the years, World Vision's work expanded many other countries and presently works in nearly one hundred countries around the world.



### Involvement in Bangladesh

World Vision's first involvement in Bangladesh was in response to the 1970 tidal surge that occurred in the coastal area of the country. World Vision provided emergency relief supplies to the disaster victims of Bhola. In 1971, World Vision International carried out relief operations in refugee camps in India and following Bangladesh's liberation from Pakistan in 1972, it started relief and rehabilitation programs in Birisiri, Netrokona district and now World Vision's programs and activities are spread across 31 administrative districts through 66 ADPs (Area Development Program) and 22 Special Project in Bangladesh. World Vision works through long-term sustainable community development programs and immediate disaster relief assistance in 80 locations at sub-district level, impacting the lives of around 5 million people with various services.



# Purpose of story book



It is a book containing a collection of impact stories of Child Safety Net Project. Through this book we want show how the vulnerable community people especially children/women/trafficking survivors change their life through the support to Child Safety Net Project. These stories come to life in a comprehensive book that promises to guide, inspire, and transform our organization

## The Objectives of this storybook are-

- ◆ To provide an overview of the changes of vulnerable people especially in southern part of Bangladesh.
- ◆ We can know how people can establish themselves through a hard labor.
- ◆ It is an encouragement of other vulnerable people because they fell encourage by reading this storybook.
- ◆ Gives a broader picture of the vulnerable people
- ◆ To creating a brighter brand
- ◆ Inspire the other vulnerable people

This storybook contains different success stories of CSNP like survivors, CFS, IGA, LSBE, Child Journalism, GO/NGO contribution, Project special achievement etc.





## Ruptula\* Returns to School Safely

Ruptula\* survived trafficking, thanks to the training of World Vision and the support of the local Counter Trafficking Committee (CTC). Her journey took her from her hometown to Dhaka, Delhi, and back. As a 14-year-old, Ruptula is the eldest of three children, a high school student from a poor Muslim family who lives in Southern Bangladesh. Ruptula's father, 45, owns a small farm that produces food for only three months of the year. He supplements his farm income with his tea store that earns about 500 taka/day (USD \$6). Ruptula's mother, 35, rears goats, milking cows, and domestic birds—contributing milk and eggs to the family income. Ruptula is very fortunate she is among the teens to be traced, rescued and repatriated at home from an Indian brothel.



Ruptula has two sisters, 9 and 6, who are in primary school. In addition to food, clothing and shelter, the children need school supplies & stationery, school uniforms, shoes and private tuition fees. Ruptula's father can hardly afford these extra expenses. Living in poverty, Ruptula had zeal to work and earn money to help support her family. Ruptula was lured and trapped by her cousin Farisa\*, 26, with a promise of handsome salaries and a comfortable living in Dhaka capital. "Keeping everything hidden to our parents, in April 2014, my classmate Ruby\*, 14, and I fled from school and got on a bus, knowing that we were heading to Dhaka," describes Ruptula. "That was my first day of a journey outside home alone." After traveling for 48 hours, Ruptula discovered that road signs were written in Hindi (Indian language) and they were traveling through India, from West Bengal to Delhi. "When I challenged Farisa for the type of job she promised to offer me, Farisa beat us badly and kept us unfed in lockups for sale as sex slaves," uttered Ruptula. "The very day Ruptula and Ruby did not return home from school, I suspected Farisa and went searching to her house, as she was infamous as a trafficker," says Ruptula's mother. Farisa's family members could not connect with her on the phone as she was out of reach. Having no other options for finding the girls, Ruptula's mother reported them to the local CTC. The CTC is trained and nurtured by World Vision's Child Protection Programme. Mohammad Tipu Sultan, 50, the chairperson of the CTC, played a significant role in the rescue of Ruptula and Ruby. Tipu Sultan rushed to Farisa's house and explained the consequences and punishment of trafficking - a life sentence from criminal court. He pressured Farisa's family and they promised to bring the girls back home within 24 hours. Ruptula is an advocate for educating her schoolmates on anti-trafficking and social issues that affect children. "Immediate after her repatriation, World Vision provided counseling and helped Ruptula to be treated for any trauma," says Abeda Sultana, a project officer. In addition, World Vision provided her needed supplies for returning to school. Abeda gushes, "Within seven months of preparation at school, she appeared for her public examination and passed with A credit.



"World Vision worked with her father to stock his tea store with other grocery items to sell, like rice, flour and salt. They helped him decorate the stall for his store and he now earns about 1200 taka/day (about USD \$16). Today, Ruptula and her siblings are enjoying school and doing well. Their parents are now able to afford healthy food, clothing and their education costs. "My girls remain healthy and do not get sick now, as I provide them plenty vegetable, fish, eggs, and milk," says Ruptula's mother. In their community, World Vision held 'Courtyard Meetings', delivering training on combating

human trafficking. In her school and community, Ruptula is an advocate for educating her schoolmates on anti-trafficking and social issues that affect children. "Now I am drawing a new dream with World Vision's support and getting prepared for my future," says Ruptula.

**\*Alias to protect identity**

**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**



# Bordering on a Nightmare



"It was Friday when it happened. My mum was out, so I went to the playground and was hanging out there when this man came over and started talking to me." "He was asking about my family and when I told him that my parents were divorced and I lived with my mum, he offered me a job in Dhaka." "I told him to talk to my mother about it, but he said not to tell her anything. That made me suspicious; so I began walking home, but he grabbed my hand and forced me on to his motorbike before covering my mouth with a handkerchief." "That was the last thing I remember until I woke up in a strange room. The door opened and a woman came in. She saw me crying and I asked her where I was, so she told me: India."

Satkhira is a district in the south-west that given it shares a border with the Indian state of West Bengal is a trafficking hotspot out of the country. With her relatives living in poverty and not having any money to lend, Rani (her mother) had no option but to move into her sister's house, which her sibling already shared with their frail, elderly mother. This was not ideal, however, with Moni's home life leading to frustration and hardship, especially when there wasn't enough food.

When she realized her daughter was missing, Rani looked everywhere and asked everyone. She recalls, "Luckily, a few people had noticed and knew the man talking to Moni\* that day, so a group of us went to his house but he wasn't there, so I called the police and prayed for her rescue." But the locals weren't prepared to wait, taking the law into their own hands. As word spread of Moni's abduction, an angry mob formed to storm the suspected trafficker's home and this time he was in. The enraged villagers beat the suspect ferociously, forcing him to confess to his crime. With the mob keeping him locked up, he had no choice but to call his collaborators and plead for them to bring Moni back, which they did the next morning.

Moni was out of immediate danger, but she and her family still needed help, so community leaders contacted World Vision to include the girl in its Child Safety Net Project. After identifying the family's dire need for economic assistance, World Vision's local team gave them a young cow and some cloth for Rani to sell door-to-door.

Rani says, "I've sold almost all of the cloth now and have a decent profit to buy more stock. I can spend a lot more time with Moni, too." Reintegration into mainstream society is a huge issue for children involved in trafficking, especially for girls who often suffer the stigma associated with the crime. And if a female victim of trafficking returns with a sexually transmitted infection, her life will be extremely challenging if her community ostracizes her and her family. World Vision's counseling support, which tackles this issue, minimized the stress Moni underwent after her rescue, allowing her to resume her college studies. She says, "I want to finish university and join the civil service, either in health or education. So I'm very happy that World Vision will help me with my education because my mum wouldn't be able to afford it on her own."

**\*Alias to protect identity**

**By Lipy Mary Rodrigues, Communication Specialist**





# Trafficked Survivor Irani's\* Enslavement Ends

Irani was brought up very poorly due to her family extreme poverty. Her family shifted different places to change their fate but all vain. These results their family broken situation and their parents are separated. Finding no alternatives one day their mother (Anwara Begum) left them (Irani & her brother) in Jessore, traveled to Dhaka and took a job in a garments factory to afford to take care of her children.

In her absence, Jhorna (22) lured Irani into temptation. Jhorna promised Irani a good job with handsome salary in Dhaka that would enable Irani to help her mother and little brother. As Jhorna warned Irani to keep it secret, one morning she fled from home and traveled with Jhorna for Dhaka. But, instead of going to Dhaka, Jhorna took her to the border port of Benapole town and traveled to Mumbai red light district. Jhorna halted in Bongaon, West Bengal for three days then traveled to Hawra, then to Mumbai by train and stayed for three days in the house of one of Jhorna's relatives. Jhorna and Irani met Promotho, 35, an unregistered husband of Jhorna and a pimp who took them to Pune and boarded them in a rented room. They three of them shared one bed in this room but Irani discovered that Jhorna was working as a 'Bar Dancer' and Promotho as a Valet and counterfeit currency trader.

For five months, Jhorna engaged Irani as a house cleaner and pushed her to washing clothes, cleaning dishes and sweeping room all household chores and finally pushed her to be a 'Bar Dancer' as well sex slave. After getting confirmed reports, Police raided Jhorna's brothel, arrested Jhorna and rescued Irani.

Indian Police identified Irani as a minor girl and they invoked the stringent act of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences accused. Irani was sent to Dongri Remand Home for 45 days and then to Deonar Government Special Rehabilitation Center, where she had to stay for 15 months before being repatriated.



World Vision's Child Safety Net Project staff communicated and received Irani from Deonar Government Special Rehabilitation Center at the Benapole border town in August 13, 2014. Irani, sent to Dhaka Ahsania Mission shelter home first with necessary food, medical treatment, counseling and life-skills education besides, Irani received training on 'Garments Machine Operations' successfully at the shelter home for which World Vision paid all the cost; after her completion of training she was provided the sewing machine and heifer from World Vision Bangladesh, Child Safety Net Project to ensure her rehabilitation.

After four months stay in the shelter home, she returned home to her mother and got a job with Ayesha Abed Foundation, Jessore, where her mother also works, a walking distance from their residence.

Anowara dreams her children will not suffer as she did and they will be responsible man and women for their families. "Thanks World Vision who brought me back from India to my mother and brother in Bangladesh. Now my skill training helps me to fresh start my life again." Recently, Irani got married and led a happy family life.

**\*Alias to protect identity**

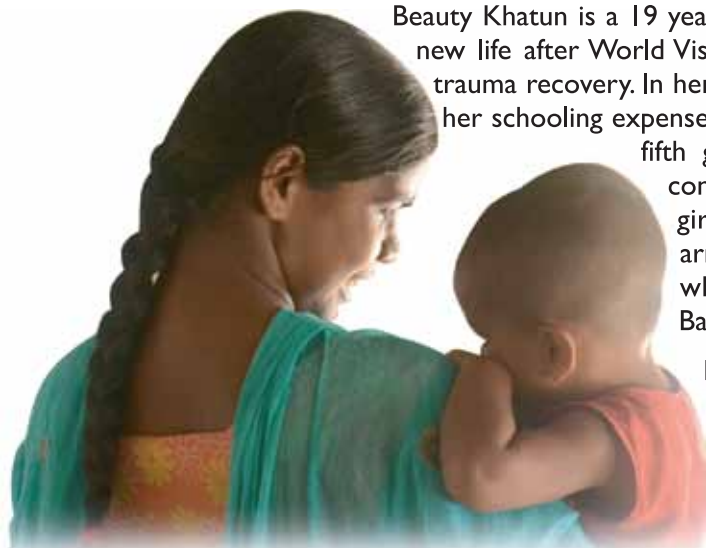
**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**







## Beauty Khatun\* Starts a New Delighted Life



Beauty Khatun is a 19 year old survivor of sex trafficking, who has started a new life after World Vision provided material support and counseling for trauma recovery. In her early childhood, Beauty's parents could not afford her schooling expenses, due to poverty. When Beauty was only 11 and in fifth grade, she dropped out of school to work and contribute to the household chores. As many young girls in her community do, Beauty accepted an arranged marriage by her parents at the age of 17, which was a child marriage, punishable by Bangladeshi law.

Beauty's parents were tricked by some traffickers to arrange Beauty's marriage with a stranger in June 2012. A week after marriage her husband took her to some unidentified relatives' house, was given toxic medicines and trafficked to a brothel in Mumbai India. Beauty's mother filed a

"trafficking case" against the stranger. "I was sold to a brothel owner in Mumbai, beaten brutally and burnt by cigarettes. I was kept unfed in a dark narrow room, raped several times by the owner and forced in sex work for strangers in the residential hotels," says Beauty.

In captivity and in the hellish red light world, Beauty had to entertain sex with between ten and twenty men round the clock. In one occasion, a sex customer helped Beauty to make a phone call to her home and ask for rescue help. Meanwhile, Hasan (32) a pimp from Beauty's native country, helped her to escape from the brothel and travel back home to Bangladesh. On Beauty's arrival to Benapole crossborder point, World Vision provided her a vehicle to travel safe to her residence late at night. They also helped her to go through the legal procedures before being formally handed over to her family by the police court, as she was lost, but returned home alive finally. World Vision continued providing food, healthcare, transportation and counseling services for her healing.

It was soon discovered that Beauty had become pregnant from sexual exploitation, and she wanted to abort her baby, as she did not want to expose herself to public disgrace. World Vision's field staff counseled Beauty and she agreed to keep the baby, when she understood the meaning of an abortion is killing of a human being in her womb. World Vision provided health checkups and necessary prenatal care which kept her fit to give birth to a healthy baby girl in January 2014. WV provided all the expenses for her child delivery and provided necessary baby ware and medications too.

To create a sustained livelihood for reintegration, WV provided Beauty with some grocery items including rice, flour, sugar, lentil, oil, salt for running a grocery shop at her home. Since then, Beauty has improved her ability to generate income, while neighbors buy grocery items from her shop. She earns a profit every day. To reduce social stigma towards her unwanted baby, World Vision educated the community on human trafficking and to treat Beauty and her child well, as one of their good neighbors.



"No people from our community condemn Beauty for what happened to her life in the red light world. We are happy that Beauty has returned home alive", says Nargis Begum, a neighbor. Today, Beauty has become a fulltime mother and a very busy shop manager. "I am happy that World Vision is on my side and helped me to start a new delighted life," Beauty expressed her deep gratitude. Beauty does not feel ashamed, but rather delighted to share her bad memories to protect other teenagers from being trafficked.



**\*Alias to protect identity**  
**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**

# Bangladesh: Child Protection

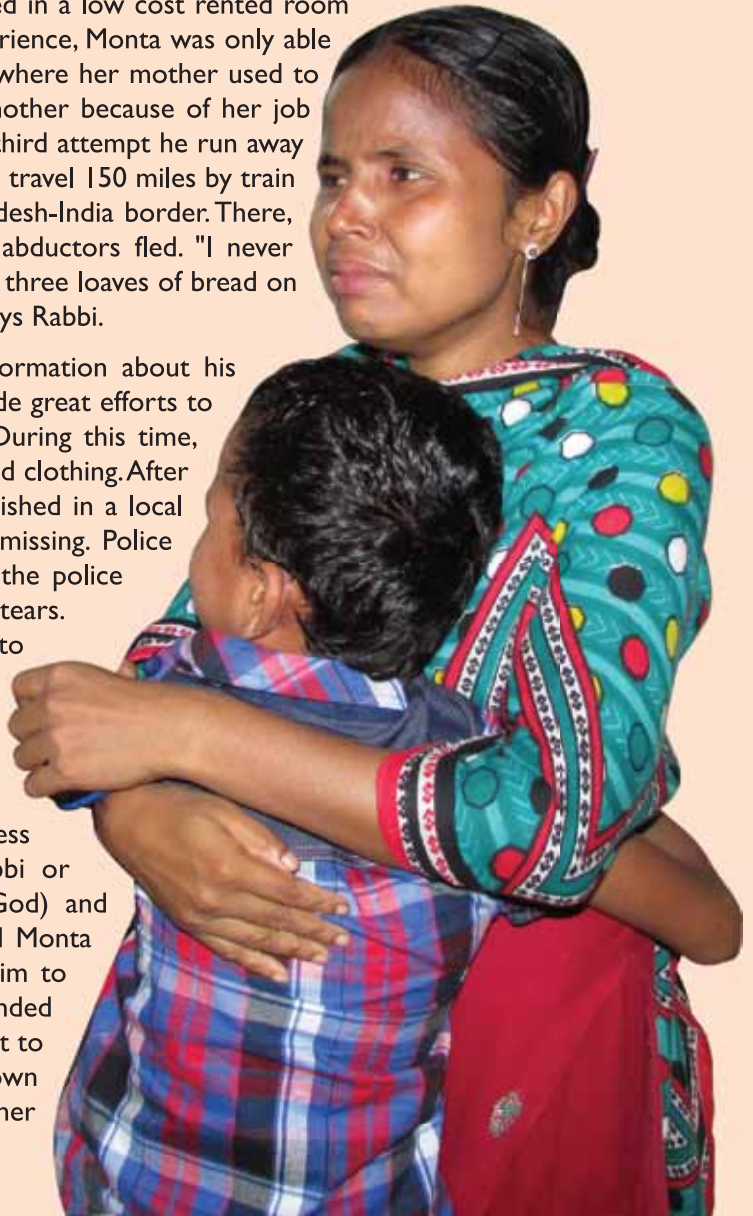
## Repatriation Brings Shared Happiness

Ten-year-old boy Rabbi\* stayed home alone while his mother Monta\* (27) worked in a garment factory to support her family. Monta had migrated to Dhaka from a village in Northern Bangladesh, leaving behind her day laborer husband Muksidul (32), and entrusting her two younger children, son Azizul (7), and daughter Moni (3), to her mother-in-law's care. In Dhaka, Rabbi fled from the home he shared with his mother and was lured to the Bangladesh-India border by two traffickers. At the border, the Bangladesh police rescued Rabbi from his traffickers and then turned him over to World Vision's Child Protection Program, which sheltered Rabbi before reuniting him with his mother.

Monta brought Rabbi to Dhaka, where they stayed in a low cost rented room in a slum. Since she had no training, skills or experience, Monta was only able to secure a low paying job at a garment factory where her mother used to work with poor salary. Due to less care from mother because of her job Rabbi is insane and tried to flee and finally in his third attempt he run away and met two child traffickers who coerced him to travel 150 miles by train to the Benapole immigration point of the Bangladesh-India border. There, police intervened and rescued Rabbi, while his abductors fled. "I never knew where I travelled, but those buddies fed me three loaves of bread on our train journey and offered me [a] good job," says Rabbi.

Rabbi provided World Vision staff with false information about his family and reasons for leaving home. But they made great efforts to locate his family, assisted by Bangladesh police. During this time, World Vision provided Rabbi with shelter, food, and clothing. After 44 days, police recognized Rabbi in a photo published in a local newspaper, after his mother reported her son missing. Police contacted Monta, who rushed immediately into the police station and hugged & kissed Rabbi and burst into tears. Rabbi also cried aloud and promised his mother to become obedient. Rabbi was officially handed over to her mother. To strengthen her and lessen her financial burdens incurred during her search for Rabbi, World Vision provided food for Monta.

"While Rabbi was missing, I showed unwillingness towards my husband's proposal to forget Rabbi or return home," weeps Monta. "I thank Allah (God) and World Vision to bring my son back to me," said Monta with gratitude. Having Rabbi back, Monta sent him to their village and admitted him into a private funded madrasah (school). "I like my new madrasah. I want to study hard and help my parents while I am grown up," says Rabbi. Monta dreams to go back to her village and start a business.



**\*Alias to protect identity**

**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**





## Shikha\* Leads a Dignified Living

Shikha's\* (19), hardship begun after her parents, Sheikh Ali Hossain (62) and Masura Begum (45) being divorced. After her parent's separation, Shikha decided to stay with her mother, who never married again, but her father married again and left Shikha's family forever. Shikha's elder sister, Rani (25), and her mother were working as house cleaners to support the family.

Her misery worsen in 2008, when she was 13, in absence of her sister and mother, three young men raped her brutally and left her unconscious in a school play-ground, nearby to her residence. Police rescued Shikha and filed suit against the rapists. Within a short period of trial, due to lack of proper follow up from Shikha's behalf, the court dismissed the case, which benefited the rapists.

Immediately after the trial was over, Arijul Islam 28, a cousin came to visit Shikha's home to show sympathy and proposed to marry Rani. He offered food and clothes for them and acted as if he was their caring family member. As a result of this, Rani was convinced and married Arijul. After their wedding, Arijul asked Rani and Shikha to go with him to Dhaka, the Capital city, for a better living.

Initially they refused, but when Arijul allured them with the idea of making more money, food, shelter and luxurious life in Dhaka, they were convinced to go. Instead of Dhaka, Arijul headed to Mumbai in India and stayed in his relative's house, who works as a broker in a brothel Mumbai. One evening, Arijul took Shikha to a brothel sold her secretly and disappeared. In the brothel, Shikha experienced brutal sexual assault night after night. But in one night, when Shikha's madam was busy with some customers, Shikha escaped from the brothel and with the help of a pimp, she traveled back home in Bangladesh.



"Being sold by my brother-in-law, I failed to take any legal action against Arijul as I always wanted my sister Rani to live peacefully with her husband" said Shikha, "I forgave him". Just after few days later Shikha trapped again when she was introduced with unknown Habibor (32), a young and marry her and found him as a robber. This broke her heart, because by this time she got pregnant and Habibur left her. In this miserable condition she is introduced to World Vision's Child Safety Net Project staff. Shikha was provided counseling from World Vision and recovered from her trauma situation. To generate income from a grocery, World Vision also provided her chocolate, candies, cookies and potato chips to sell among the school children and make profit. World Vision's staff took Shikha to a medical doctor for her health checkup and ensured prenatal care.

Nowadays Shikha, even in her current pregnancy period, sells chocolate and candies to the school children. For this she sits in a hut for three hours daily and she wants to shape up her new life with an honest income and dignity.

**\*Alias to protect identity**

**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**







# Sunrises Again in Rusmi's\* Precious Life

**"Thanks World Vision, who has gifted me this normal life again. I want to complete my studies and become a doctor to serve the poor people in the community."**

Everything was fine for Rusmi, until Nurul Haque (66), a house tutor spoiled everything. Nurul was lodging in a neighbor's house. In the beginning, Nurul seemed to be very friendly with the children and especially with Rusmi and her parents. Nurul used to teach a group of children along with Rusmi and her brother Rafi, asking for very little in tuition fees but it was a pretend from him.

Based on this trustworthy relationship, Nurul's relatives came to Rusmi's house many times for visits. As time went by, Nurul proposed love to Rusmi, something Rusmi was not prepared for. In mid-March 2012, Nurul allured Rusmi, and convinced her that she would have a better life after marriage and they flew from the village. No one in the village knew where they had gone, but Nurul and Rusmi headed to Dhaka, rented a house and started to share a bed as a couple. Night after night, Nurul raped Rusmi and lied to the community that Rusmi was his granddaughter. Meanwhile, Nurul made Rusmi work at an apparel factory, and this factory was the only place where Rusmi can go every day or night. Rusmi spent five months in this captive life and her parents had no idea of her whereabouts. Rusmi was fading away from the regular rape and physical torture. She attempted suicide several times to no avail. She could not shout but she sobbed bitterly and prayed to God for relief.

Rusmi's broken-hearted parents took several initiatives to look for Rusmi, but Nurul's relatives never helped them locate Nurul. Rusmi's parents sold their only cow to arrange money for travelling different places in search of Rusmi and they spent their last penny. By God's grace, Mrs. GulshanAra Dolly (46), a neighbor of Rusmi's parents, trained by World Vision (Child Safety Net Project), took the lead to file an official complaint to the Police and prayed for Rusmi's rescue. Eventually the police found Nurul, arrested him and took Rusmi into safe custody.

World Vision (Child Safety Net Project) staff provided counseling to Rusmi's parents and helped them understand her mental stress and trauma. Finally, the parents decided to move Rusmi to a shelter home of a local organization- "Dhaka Ahsania Mission", in Jessore city for counseling and trauma recovery.

With the support of WV, within ten days, Rusmi managed to return to normalcy and agreed to go back home. WV provided her all educational equipment. Rusmi is now confident enough about her personal growth and she will not agree to get married until she finishes her University studies.



# Chinu\* Arises from Dust with Hopes



Nineteen-year-old Chinu lives in Moghia Village in the Southern Bangladesh in a family of seven with her parents. Chinu's father Azahar Ali Seikh (60) and her two brothers Akbor (28) and Iqbal (25) are day laborers. Azahar became physically disable when he fell down from a plum tree in 2007 and could not work since then. Akbor and Iqbal work hard in neighbors' crop fields to earn poor daily wages.

As the poverty was so tastelessly indecent, Chinu's parents intended to marry off Chinu at her age of 15. Chinu's brother-in-law Al Amin

Fokir (30) proposed a help to arrange her marriage with a Policeman, taking Chinu to Bagerhat a nearby town and trafficked her to New Delhi, India on February 27, 2015. Chinu's parents and relatives were unable to trace and finally they filed a missing complaint to the Police. "My cousin Dulaly (28), wife of the trafficker Al Amin Fokir was arrested and taken to the jail. Dulaly helped Police to locate Al Amin Fokir and later on Police arrested him," narrates Chinu, "The legal trial is on board and I expect a capital punishment for the criminal Al Amin Fokir."

In fifty-eight days after missing, Indian Police rescued Chinu from a hotel-based brothel and sent her to a home in New Delhi for twenty-eight days. Bangladesh Police repatriated and reintegrated Chinu to her parents' family in the village. With sheltering, counseling and medical treatment supports from WV's Child Safety Net Project (CSNP), it took seven months for Chinu to recover from trauma caused by sexual abuse, physical and emotional tortures in brothels of New Delhi, India.

She was found much distressed, passive and traumatized. WV's Child Safety Net Project staff arranged 'Community Education' on anti-human trafficking and violence against children and women. WV offered Chinu material supports to help her tackle the defective situation. At the shelter home, Chinu received counseling on a daily basis and recovered from trauma. Soon, Chinu started painting pictures, sewing dresses and playing with her peers who have similar unpleasant experience. She received tailoring training and materials redundant and started her tailoring shop at home. Both her physical and emotional health improved day by day and she seemed very cheerful and remaining busy with small household chores.

Chinu is now valued by her family and community. "I remain very busy in my tailoring trades of making children and women dresses that help me to keep good relationship with our neighbors and some earning also," says Chinu. "As a survivor, I am so honored to receive cordial services, skill training and treatment supports from World Vision. Thanks to WV for everything, they provided me for a fresh start,' Chinu expresses with gratitude.

**\*Alias to protect identity**

**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**





# A Trafficking Survivor's Success Awarded Nationally

A sudden mishap engulfs the life of an adolescent girl to a dark hole. Sonali\*, a 13 years 7th grade school student, found her in a captive place waiting to be sold through pimps for sex slavery abroad. This is not an end story but this is just the beginning of a promising story of a smart girl, now achieved nationally recognized award with her tremendous success overcoming personal trauma and social stigma.

In January 2014, on her regular way to school, unexpectedly Sonali\* met her paternal aunt who allured her to visit a new nice place to enjoy and see new things. Sonali\* simply accepted the proposal without much thinking and actually sent her to a trap to destroy her life. Instantly the news came to World Vision Bangladesh and CSP, Jessore Area office, took quick initiatives to communicate with Police station and Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Lohagora (Sub-district of Nrail District) and also informed local journalists to publish a missing report. WVB staff also met with Sonali's\* family and assisted them to file a general diary in near police station. Immediately the news had been scattered to the border areas so that the girls may not be trafficked externally. Finally with the help of CSNP and the local leaders and LEAs (Member, Chairman, Police and Border Guard) a tremendous pressure had been created on her relatives and finally the traffickers agreed to send her back to her parents i.e. ended her 9 days captive/abducted life.

When she was brought back, she was severely suffering from trauma and WVB spread soft hands to her first as counseling to her and family as well to convince the local Head teacher of school to send her back to school. Finally the school agreed she continue school. As she is from a poor family, WVB has provided different need-based support for her educational and economic purpose (School tuition, books, school dress, warm cloth, blanket, medical treatment etc.) Considering her future needs, WVB has provided an IGA (Heifer) to her parents to earn and save some money for her future education and development.

Sonali\* is now continuing her education in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and doing well in her education and came back to a normal life. Last year she sat for JSC (Junior School Certificate) final exam where she achieved a good (A) grade. Sonali's\* success attracts government of Bangladesh and become an example to others survivors how to overcome trauma and continue education for future development. This year she was awarded as Best Jojeta in Khulna Division, District & Sub-district, a national level recognition for extraordinary girls/women who overcome all adverse situations of their life and continue dream for future. Sonali\* expressed her views as, "World Vision has changed my life, showed a right path, paved the way for future." Sonali's\* achievement brings hope for a number of same survivors of southern Bangladesh build up their future crushing the past backlogs.



**\*Alias to protect identity**

**By Subrata Sarker Chandan, Information & Documentation Officer**





## A Child Friendly Space Odyssey



Child Friendly Space (CFS) is a structured and safe place where children and youth meet other children to play, learn competencies to deal with the risks they face, be involved in some educational activities and relax in a safe place.

Bristy is a beneficiary and one of the promising kids of CFS of Child Safety Net Project of WVB. Not like fancy dream to other same aged children, Bristy's only dream was simpler: she just wanted to go to school. But the flimsy income her father made, working in a less-than-five-star hotel meant there was nothing left for 'luxuries' like education after forking out for her and her two younger siblings' basic needs. And with the three young children meaning he faced a daily struggle to make ends meet, Bristy chose not to nag her father to fund her school fees despite aching to learn, her ever-present smile hiding her disappointment. Home for the wannabe scholar is in the Bangladeshi region of Kalkini, and it was here that she met Sayeda Lubna, one of World Vision's team bringing its Child Safety Net project to life.

A key part of the project is its Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), which are used in emergency situations or locations with deep-seated poverty to create safe places for children to play and learn. After discovering that Bristy had never attended school, staying all day at home with her mother instead, Lubna suggested she join Kalkini's CFS programme, which she did in 2012 after her community selected her for the opportunity. Bristy's dream was back on.

Now she has 'graduated' from her CFS group, the six-year-old is happily nestled in grade one at a state-run primary school in Kalkini, with the hardworking, enthusiastic pupil having come top of her class last year and being able to read



and write at impressive speed. Without the CFS and her parents' encouragement, though, she is certain she would still be back home, excluded from school. She says: "When I first joined the class, everything was new because I'd never been to any lesson before."

Bristy hasn't lost touch with her CFS teachers, however, as she regularly attends their life coaching classes. Her mother, Asma, says, "In her lessons, Bristy's learned a lot about water hygiene, how we should wash our hands properly and how to behave with older people, which she's taught to her siblings. And now she says she wants to be a doctor when she grows up."

For Bristy, the CFS mentoring and motivational support she received was crucial in her development and today she is a perfect example of someone who achieves despite whatever hurdles are in the way. As she says, smiling again: "My parents are very proud of me and I'm proud of myself."

**By Gloria Das, Communication Specialist**



# School Journey: One Girl's Long Walk



The sweet name Opi, 9, leaves for school at 10:30 am and it takes 1.5 hours for her to walk to school, which is 1.5 km away from her house. She is a grade 3 student in a primary school. She grew up with her aunt Shahera the only mother she knows as she live in a home outside brothel. Shahera helps her prepare for school. They are from a remote village and need to collect rainwater for drinking in a harsh geographic situation.

She has a younger sister, named Soniya, who is only 8 months old. Opi loves to play with her sister before starting her journey to the school. Their birth mother, Sumi, sends some money to Shahera to support the girls from time to time, but the small family mainly earns income from Shahera's tea stall.

The way to school is difficult but Opi never stops. During most of her walk, the sun shines down on her making her sweaty and tired. Opi's village is next to the river. Every year many houses are lost due to river erosion. There are many difficulties along the way. There are 3 rickety bamboo bridges to cross. Sometimes there is too much rain and the roads become slick with thick mud. "I feel afraid when I have to cross this rickety bamboo bridge," says Opi. Sometimes community people help her to cross the bridge but most of the time she has to cross it alone.

Opi has a friend named Raiju, 10, who lives one kilometer away. Sometimes they get to walk part of the way to school together. They are in the same class and they always play together during break time at school. Her teacher says Opi is a good student and she always does her homework. Opi says, "In the future I want to be a doctor and start a clinic in our Banishanta area and serve people." At the end of the school day, it is getting dark. She is often scared of the sounds from animals and dogs. With the sunset, Opi doesn't linger on all those difficulties, but she continues her study once she arrives home, so she can achieve her dreams.



By Shabir Hussain, Communication Specialist



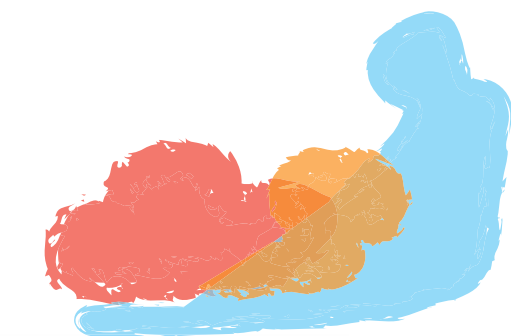


# Alamin Enrolls in School, Stops Collecting Trash

Five-year-old boy Alamin had roamed around the city all day long with his mother and picked up trash from the street. His mother Shainur Begun (30) did not have any dream for her child. Alamin's father Samma (45) is a rickshaw puller and earns poor wages to afford his family of five.

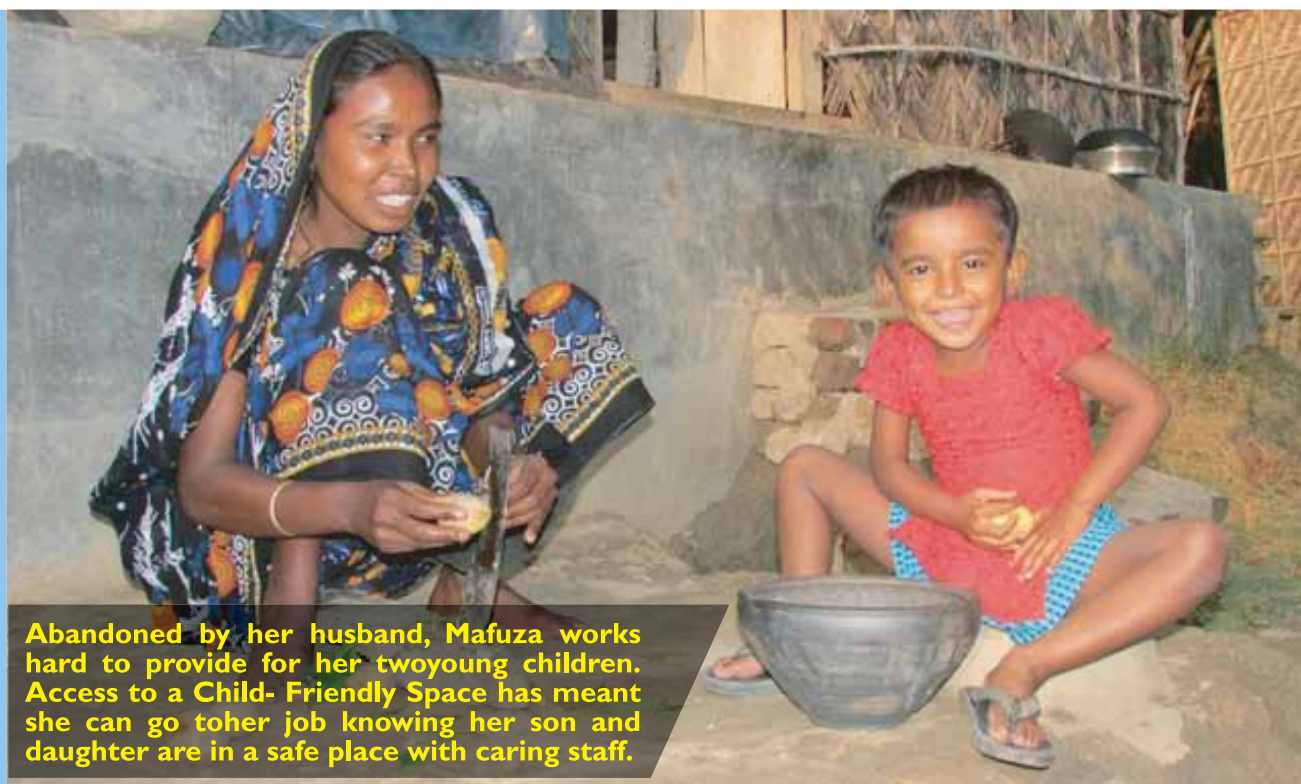
In January 2015, the Child Safety Net Project (CSNP) found Alamin collecting trash from a dump with a big bag on his shoulder. One of World Vision's staff took him to the Child Friendly Space (CFS). Since January 2015, Alamin is attending regularly at Barandipara CFS. When he was admitted in the CFS, he had no knowledge on alphabet, number and personal behavior. Alamin did not have his birth registration. CSNP ensured his birth registration as priority and started teaching him pre-school education and some other creative learning such as drawing, singing, etc. CSNP also provided counseling several times to Alamin's parents and tried to make them aware on caregiving parenting, schooling, cleanliness and hygiene, etc. Alamin has learned Bengali and English alphabets from CFS as well as counting numbers. When Alamin was found, he was very dirty and ugly, he was not ready to wear any cloths. He was less responsive towards others and did not like to talk at all. By the cares of CSNP, Alamin has now changed his habits; he became more active than he was. He wears dresses and tries to keep himself neat and clean. Now he likes to interact with his peers, enjoying drawings, singing, playing with other children in the CFS. Alamin's parent never thought about his education but now Alamin's mother regularly brings him to the CFS. They shifted their residence to nearby the CFS as it was somewhat far. CSNP continues its support and care to Alamin and tries to prepare him for formal education. Alamin's father is very grateful to CSNP and he says- "Once CSNP was asked me why I was not sending Alamin at school? I told Alamin knows nothing and as we also, we could not able to make him ready for formal education. Now Alamin learned many things from CFS, I will not send him further for picking up trash from street even if CSNP's support will stop; I will send him to school."

Alamin is an example of CSNP's initiative towards positive change of children life. These type of changes are now happening to the life of hundreds children who are participating at CFS by introducing a child protection system, with integrated social work, early detection and referral services, for vulnerable children in the Southern part of Bangladesh.





## CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACE KEEPS CHILDREN SAFE WHILE THEIR MOTHER WORKS TO SUPPORT THEM



**Abandoned by her husband, Mafuza works hard to provide for her two young children. Access to a Child-Friendly Space has meant she can go to her job knowing her son and daughter are in a safe place with caring staff.**

Mahfuza an industrious woman and a true mother, bound to marry Maola, who already had a wife and four children in 2007. When Mafuza gave birth to a son, Bokul, in 2008, it was a source of happiness for her husband. But three years later, after she had a second baby, a girl named Mala, Maola forced out his wife and two young children. This left Mahfuza with sole responsibility to care for a two kid's family.

In this abject situation, for a time, Mafuza lived hand to mouth as a day laborer, earning about \$1.25 a day, while working three to four days a week. With materials supplied by a nonprofit, Mafuza built a house to live in on her sister's land. Mafuza attempted to increase her income by selling fabric as a street vendor—a business she started with a loan from her sister—but she lost the business. A new work opportunity became available thanks to a local government food security program for vulnerable women. Mafuza joined a road maintenance crew comprised of 10 women.

Her job tasks include leveling the slope of roads, refilling holes caused by rain, and weeding with spades and traditional tools. Mafuza receives \$38 in cash every month. The program places another \$19 per month into a savings account for her. Along with the benefits of the new job came concerns.

Mafuza was scheduled to work six days a week, and during this time, her children were left alone at home with no one to take care for them. Thankfully, neighbors connected Mafuza to a Child-Friendly Space, operated by the Bangladesh Child Protection Program. "World Vision enrolled Mafuza's children into [a] Child-Friendly Space, the support Mafuza prayed for her children," said Hafizur Rahaman, a member of the program staff. Meanwhile, Mafuza received parental skills training from World Vision, which helped her to becoming a caring mother. "My husband abandoned us and never provided food or other necessities of life", Mafuza shared, "But being a mother, I cannot leave my children at any cost." Kobita Biswas, a leader of the road maintenance group, said, "Mafuza wakes up early in the morning, prepares her children, feeds [them], and brings them to the Child-Friendly Space before leaving for [her] workplace."

Mahfuza's sacrifice and care successfully led Bokul (son) transitioned out of the CFS and enrolled in a government primary school. His younger sister, Mala, still participates in activities at the Child Friendly Space.



**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**

# Bangladesh: Child Protection

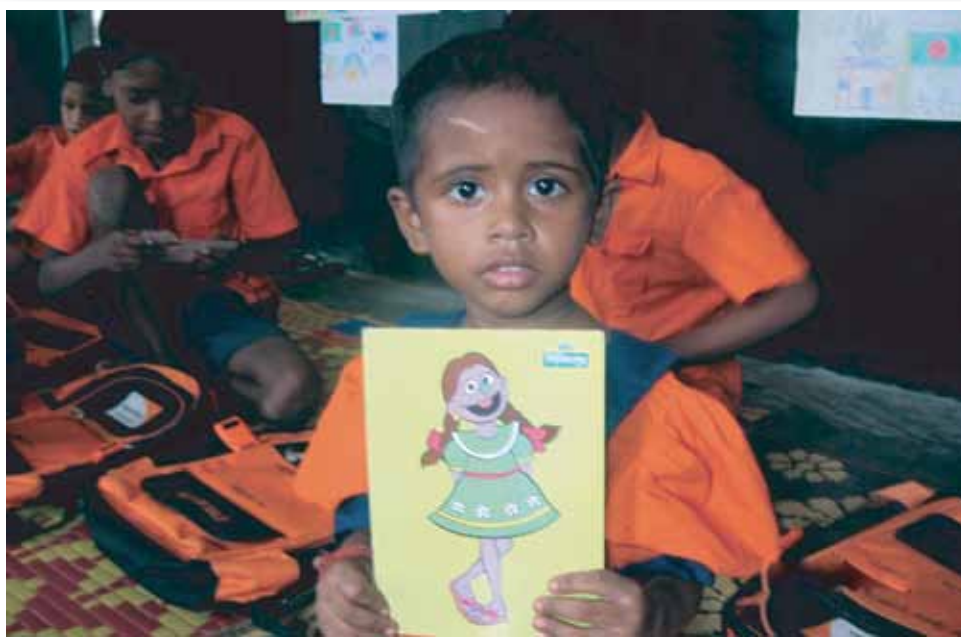
## Growing hope in a Child Friendly Space

Choity is a typical energetic, inquisitive 4-year-old whose home life is anything but typical -- she lives in a brothel with her mother and grandmother, the same brothel in which her mother and grandmother were born and raised. Choity's mother was engaged in sex work by the age of 14. If she does not stand in the line of the sex workers at the entrance to the brothel, her family will not eat. Since Choity's mother works days and nights, there is little opportunity to learn any other way of life. Choity's mother is exhausted most days and struggles to find time for her daughters.

But Choity is more fortunate than many. Following her usual breakfast of handmade bread, Choity walks alone across a busy street to World Vision's Child Friendly Space near her home in Bangladesh. World Vision opened the space to provide Choity and others with healthy activities. Choity enjoys learning rhymes, songs, counting, and the Bangla alphabet. She will happily stay and play in the space from opening to closing.

As soon as Choity enters the Child Friendly Space, everything changes -- things such as schoolwork, healthy meals, and sanitation and hygiene training become priorities and normal practices, not privileges. Attending the Child Friendly Space regularly has given Choity a healthier outlook on life. Now, she wakes up early in the morning and is careful to wash her hands at appropriate times. Choity also has learned all 50 letters of the Bangla alphabet and memorized the lyrics of the Bangladeshi anthem. Because her mother must work all the time, Choity is with her grandmother when she isn't at the Child Friendly Space. Choity's grandmother once told her about a thief who steals things such as sandals shoes and clothes from the brothel. Choity wants to become a police officer after she completes college. When asked why, she says, "I want to catch the pilferer."

Choity's mother just wants her to have a future that doesn't involve sex work. "Thanks to World Vision for ensuring our children a secured place to spend the whole day," she said. "It gives them a good foundation to grow." When she can, her mother joins Choity for lunch and a little playtime.





# BANGLADESH: Child Protection

## Babla's Story

Having autism from early childhood, 12-year-old Babla had great difficulty in communicating and forming relationships with others. Babla's parents were poor, distressed and quarrelsome. They broke up their marriage and abandoned Babla when he was only five months old. Since Babla's cognitive growth was slowed, community children of his age and even adults mistreated and teased him. He was injured from repeated beatings.

Staff from World Vision's Child Protection Project enrolled Babla in one of their Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS), where hundreds of vulnerable children like Babla spend a few joyful hours a day learning new things through reciting, playing, drawing, singing and dancing. After a year at the CFS, Babla overcame his communication challenges, learning verbal language skills and expanding his social skills.

Babla's aunt, Taslima Khatun, 27, is raising Babla. She works as a housemaid and has never married for the sake of Babla's needs. Salma Ferdous, 25, Babla's facilitator at the CFS, said that initially Babla was quiet, but angry, and didn't use good judgment. The CFS staff help children grow and develop in a friendly learning environment. The children stay safe and secure when apart from their parents and caregivers. They play games, sing, recite rhymes and draw pictures. They also learn to read and write the alphabet and numbers, and they stay engaged in creative activities. Salma said, "This conducive environment, extra care, [and] speech therapy worked as a healing power for Babla, and he is able to overcome great difficulties in communicating and forming relationship with others and in using verbal language."



After transitioning from the CFS, Babla was admitted to a local public primary school and is continuing his studies in grade one. In addition, along with other students of his age, Babla receives coaching from CFS facilitators to complete homework assigned by his school teachers. World Vision provides school supplies to CFS participants, including Babla.

"Beyond these services from CFS, World Vision trained me [on] parental skills, which has changed my attitude and behavior on Babla," says his aunt, Taslima. "I am taking good care of Babla now." In addition, World Vision trained community adults and children on parental skills that motivated community people to treat Babla well and as a part of their family and community.

"Babla is...very humble in manner...bright, verbally fluent, disciplined and calm," says Salma. "The thing I like most is that I have many friends to play [with] in school, in and around my community," says Babla. In his new school, he is making good scores in his classes, and his teachers love him. At home, he receives no more mistreatment, instead receiving extra care from his aunt and grandmother. He is able to communicate verbally, which helps him to be understood clearly. Babla's aunt is a new person today. "I am very happy for Babla's radical changes. I am so happy today that I have received parental skill training from World Vision, and this is very helpful for me to take good care of Babla. Thanks to World Vision for including Babla in [their] CFS," says Taslima.



# Bangladesh- Child Protection: A Family Blessed



Life has not been easy for Rexona Begum (33). Rexona is Muslim, born to a poor family in rural Southern Bangladesh. Her parents migrated to Khulna City and dwelled in the slums for 30 years. Rexona married Sobur Seikh (38), a widower with two children, Sabina Akter (14, grade 7), and Sojib Miah (6). Sojib attends a World Vision Child Friendly Space. In fact, Sojib's involvement with World Vision's Child Protection Program has transformed the lives of this entire family, especially for Rexona.

After Rexona & Sobur married, it was difficult to afford food and education costs for their family when Sobur became ill and could not work. His income from pulling a rickshaw was lost. Over time, they became extremely poor, then destitute. "Many times I begged food from neighbors to feed my starved children," says Rexona with shyness.

World Vision found Rexona's family during their greatest time of need. To begin with, World Vision enrolled Sojib into its Child Friendly Space (CFS) program, which is part of the larger Child Protection Program. At the CFS, Sojib receives both formal and informal education. "Sojib is very smart in maintaining his personal hygiene like hand washes,

wearing clean dresses and becoming a good friend of CFS participants," says Rexona. Sojib's CFS facilitator, Trishna, confirms, "In our CFS, through our informal approaches, children learn how to respect elders, how to be friendly with other mates, how to maintain personal hygiene and how to be good boys and girls."

As a parent of a Child Friendly Space participant, Rexona was provided training from World Vision on parental skills, including a wide variety of topics around child care and parenting. She learned the benefits of home safety, child immunization and birth registration. By learning about nutrition, food preparation, safe water and sanitation, parents like Rexona can take steps to improve their family's well being. A part of the blessings from the parental skills training involves Rexona's work in educating other parents in the slums on the skills she learned from World Vision. Rexona teaches community parents about feeding, nurturing, providing a stimulating and positive environment, and promoting children's social skills. She also educates parents about teaching their children to share and cooperate, use good manners and get along with peers, siblings and adults.

"The slum dwellers address me as Aunt or Grandmother, something I feel honored about," says Rexona in a smile. The mothers in the slums trust Rexona's counseling and practice what Rexona promotes during her family visits. For Rexona's efforts, mothers and children in the slum area know how to lead a healthy life, how to behave with others/neighbors, how to show respect to elders. In the slum, children are healthier and they do not get sick of diarrhea or of any other communicable diseases.

In addition, Sabina has benefitted from World Vision's program for adolescents, which is part of the Child Protection Program. She received life skills education and learned key skills including decision making, problem solving and effective communication. "Besides, I have learned about personal hygiene and care, human trafficking, child labor, child marriage and its effects on adolescent health," says Sabina. She strongly refused to get married at age 13 and stopped her own marriage with the help of a class teacher. Sabina dreams of becoming a teacher.



Today, Sobur is back to work and earning a living to support his family. Rexona focuses on caring for her family while volunteering in the community for World Vision. And both Sabina & Sojib's involvement with World Vision has changed their lives forever. From children to adults, World Vision has impacted the lives of entire families in Rexona's neighborhood.





## A Change of Destiny: Story of Minara Begum

Destiny is certain, some people say. But Minara Begum, a 30-year-old mother left to look after her son and daughter when her sacked husband walked out, was determined to change her miserable fate, embarking on a World Vision-backed business to ensure her children enjoy an education.



Relying on her husband's paltry income as a shipyard laborer employed on a day-to-day basis, life for Minara Begum, a mother of two, was destitute and precarious, as for countless Bangladeshi women. But the 30-year-old never thought she would live through rainier days. Already living a hand to mouth existence in Mongla, a port to the north of Bangladesh's river frayed southern coastline, the family was plunged into despair when the husband, 37-year-old Md. Anwar Hossain, lost his job. But that wasn't the end of Minara's distress. Days later, her husband left the family and didn't return, without saying a word. Abandoned to care for her 12 year old son (Imran Hossain Santo) and nine year old daughter (Jannatul Ferdous Aduri) alone, Minara had no option but to pull the pair out of school: food was the priority, not education.

Despite the painful uncertainty now threatening her children's future, with even two meals a day hard to afford, Minara was adamant they would not only survive, but be educated. Though fate was crueler than she had expected, she was determined to do anything for her children. But what could she do? Having dropped out of school after grade three, she had few job options.

Such helplessness broke her heart, yet it didn't shatter. Remembering an old skill, she decided to make local style cakes. Her business made a good start, but with little capital and marginal profits, uncertainty remained.

With her daughter, Jannati Akter Adori, studying at World Vision's local Child Friendly Space, the organisation's team learned of Minara's vulnerability and courage, deciding to offer her moneymaking support, such as cake ingredients, firewood and oil, through its Child Safety Net project.

Backed by World Vision, Minara saw profits rise, meaning she could afford enough food for her family and restart her children's education, her son's at a madrasa, a religious school, and her daughter's in grade three of primary school. Then the goddess of fortune smiled at her again when her husband returned after five months. Minara still runs her small business, earning the equivalent of up to two US dollars a day by selling cakes in the morning, with sales on winter evenings boosting profits by a third. Her husband has also resumed his shipyard job, hiring a rickshaw to earn extra cash when there is no other work. His converted daily income is around three US dollars. Focusing on hygiene and quality, Minara makes cakes that are popular with young and old customers alike, with the entrepreneur now dreaming of expanding her business to continue her children's education.



Minara is determined her children won't suffer a life of destitution through education and hopes they will become good citizens. With a joyful family life, she is grateful to World Vision for offering her support when she needed it most.

**By Richa Silvia Biswas, Regional Advocacy & Communications Coordinator**



# Fatema Dreaming of a Better Future



"I was very vulnerable but Child Safety Net Project (CSP) has extended its hands to me for my better future. I am encouraged and hope from their support I can start dreaming about a better life." says Fatema Begum, one of the program participants of CSP, a project implemented by World Vision Bangladesh. Fatema lives in Jessore Sadar Upazila with her one son and two daughters. Her husband left them and remarried. The family was living on the earnings of her 14-year-old son.

After considering her situation, CSP admitted Fatema's two daughters into the child friendly space program. CSP also brought Fatema into an Income Generating Activity intervention and trained her on net bag sewing. Fatema was given a sewing machine and her earnings began from taka 30 to 50 per day. Fatema's earnings added value to her son's income. The new source of income also inspired Fatema to

develop future plans and she started saving in a local informal community group called Serial. During this time, her husband Kalam returned to them but he has not found work yet. Fatema took loans from a local NGO and bought a rickshaw for her husband. From the rickshaw they earned taka 250 to 300 per day.

With the passage of time, Fatema started to dream a big dream. She wants to lift her family out of poverty. She sold her rickshaw at taka 6000. She took another loan of taka 28000 from the community group, based on her savings. She bought a battery driven rickshaw on installment. Now her husband earns taka 400 to 600 per day and paying the loan installments from the earnings.

Fatema was crying with joy as she described her situation, "Earlier my children only ate smashed potato or smashed chilly but now things have changed. I can afford to buy fish for their daily meal. I can support both my daughter's education. Now I am able to buy festival dresses for them and encourage their hobbies too. My children are much happier now. I feel good and safe about my daughters."

Fatema is now valued more by her husband and he considers what Fatema thinks in any type of family decision. Her husband is well behaved with her also. Fatema give heartiest thanks to World Vision.







# Goat Farming Strengthens Morjina's Purchase Capacity

Morjina is rearing goats. Every day she goes to the field collect grasses for her goats. World Vision provided her with two goats two years ago, but now she has excellent growth in her small goat farm.

Morjina Khatun, 38, lives with her husband and three girls in a village under the Southern Bangladesh district of Satkhira. "Goats are our cows," says Morjina, referring to cows being a "living savings account."

As her goat farm gets larger and more profitable, it supplements the family income, along with their other products like rice, vegetables, and domestic birds.

Since their marriage in 1994, both Morjina and Nasir Sarder, 50, have been working as day laborers on others farms. "My husband's work is quiet laborious as he used to dig soil, load small trucks, and drive to kilns, a few miles away earning just 150 taka (\$1.90 USD) per day," says Morjina. They lived with barely enough money for immediate needs. Their wages were irregular and they were hungry when Nasir could not work on rainy days. Morjina used to weed on crop farms, earning 75 taka (\$1 USD) a day. "We started share cropping that produced food for six months for our family of five," describes Morjina, "We produced rice for food and jute fiber and vegetables as cash crop."

To supplement more income and ensure food, Morjina started vegetable farming, raising domestic birds and rearing milking cows but received poor returns as she lacked skills and business orientation. Morjina had a chance to attend an anti-trafficking awareness program organized by World Vision's Child Safety Net Project in her community and she shared her need of financial support to continue schooling her girls. Helping to strengthen her purchase capacity, World Vision provided Morjina training on goat rearing and in May 2013, awarded her two young goats to start her goat farm.

From the training, Morjina learned to identify goat species, about proper feeding, cage management, health care, and disease control. The training also enabled Morjina to build rapport with the government livestock officials and availed treatment services for goats, for free. She invested her time, skills and labor on goat farming and the population of goats increased rapidly. "Aiming to expand the farm, we sold eleven goats for 23000 taka (\$299) and bought a milking cow with a calf," she says. Besides feeding her girls cow milk, Morjina made money from selling extra milk, that allowed her to buy school books and stationeries for her girls.

Morjina raised chickens, ducks and geese for nutrition and food. She hatches and multiplies ducks and chickens in an old-fashioned way. As their farm grew larger, they are able to grown enough food and provide for their daughter's education. Neighbors are replicating Morjina's goat and vegetable farming.

Her two daughters, Jesmin, 16, and Tazmin, 12, are in good health, attending school, and brilliantly progressing. Jesmin dreams to be a nurse and Tazmin a teacher.



# Fight Against Poverty by Mozid Sarder



In modern terra, poverty in our country is a raising fleck, but many people defeat it with a strong morale. The story dictates a great man, Mazid Sarder, a grocery shop (supported by WVB) keeper who over comes himself from a miserable dearth. Mozid said, "People having potentiality with firm determination and devotion definitely reach to the apex of success".

Mozid Sarder (35 years) and Nasima Begum (26 years) are a happily lived married couple having a daughter Khushi (7 years) studying in class two and son Nahid Hasan (11 years) in class four. The rest member of their family is his father Anisur Rahman (62 years) is a seasonal worker (day labor, fruit monger). Mozid is considered as a role model in their locality because of his willingness to work.

Mozid Sarder is an ordinary man lives in Assasuni Upazila under Satkhira district. Most of the people of this community are Muslims & Hindus. The area is abundant with fish farm because of its salinity. Most of the people of the community search their living by involving themselves with agricultural work and fishing while, rest of the people is day laborer.

Seven years ago Mozid was a frustrated and helpless man in his locality. His family condition was so poor. That time he worked as a garment factory worker in Dhaka. But his earning was insufficient for maintaining his family as well as providing three time meals to them. For this reason his wife worked as a day labor to provide her family with extra support. Meanwhile Mozid was afflicted with heart disease. Knowing that, he returned to his village and restricted himself from doing any kind of hard work. Eventually his family condition was deteriorating. Mozid said "There was no one giving me any support for my family".

At that time World Vision came to their area with Sponsorship program of Assasuni ADP in 2005. But the community people disagree to attend their children in sponsorship program at the primary level due to superstition. They considered that World Vision might convert the people to Christian. But Mozid strongly protested it and involved his son in sponsorship program. Based on the selection criteria (poor family, low income, widow, disable land less, lower status) of sponsorship program the son of Mozid is selected as a sponsorship child. Now Nahid Hasan is a Register Child (RC) in World Vision Bangladesh. Mozid expressed that "If World Vision would not stand beside me, my child might not get the light of education".

Mozid received groceries items for business support (rice 50 kg., Dal 10 kg., oil 60 lt., potato 40 kg., salt 20 kg., soap 80 pieces, sugar 40 kg., wheel powder 20 kg.) from CSNP in 2015. Now Mozid has 03 ducks and 02 goats. WVB not only provided the support to Mozid, but also supervised this family with other community people in regular basis by organizing different program like group education, school program, cultural program etc. By this way all community people have the basic knowledge on child protection issues like negative effect of trafficking, early marriage, dowry, child labor etc.

Now Mozid is leading a better life with a handsome monthly earning of 7000-8000 TK that contribute much for family and children. Their poverty now ends and they dreamed for a better future. Her wife Nasima Begum shared that World vision makes us happy because my family is going well and my children continue their education. Thanks World Vision Bangladesh for good doing for the poor people.

By Subrata Sarker Chandan, Information & Documentation Officer





# Bamboo an IGA Support Brings Success in Life

Innovation is a common for CSNP to create diversified income generation for vulnerable community focusing children wellbeing. Tripti Rani and her family stayed in a remote down town of Jessore, commonly avoided class (Rishi Para) with economic hardship. It is not easy for them to mix with other community, but CSNP address this community main streaming to society as well their child development. Talking to this community world vision found their requirements for income generation related to local produced handicrafts; the bamboo made bed, artistic bamboo made baskets, fishing and agricultural materials. Around twenty five poor families got these materials (bamboo) and they found much happy to getting such support form World Vision. They are benefited from the support that truly contributes for their children education, health care and relevant need. Following quotations clears the evidence of their gains.

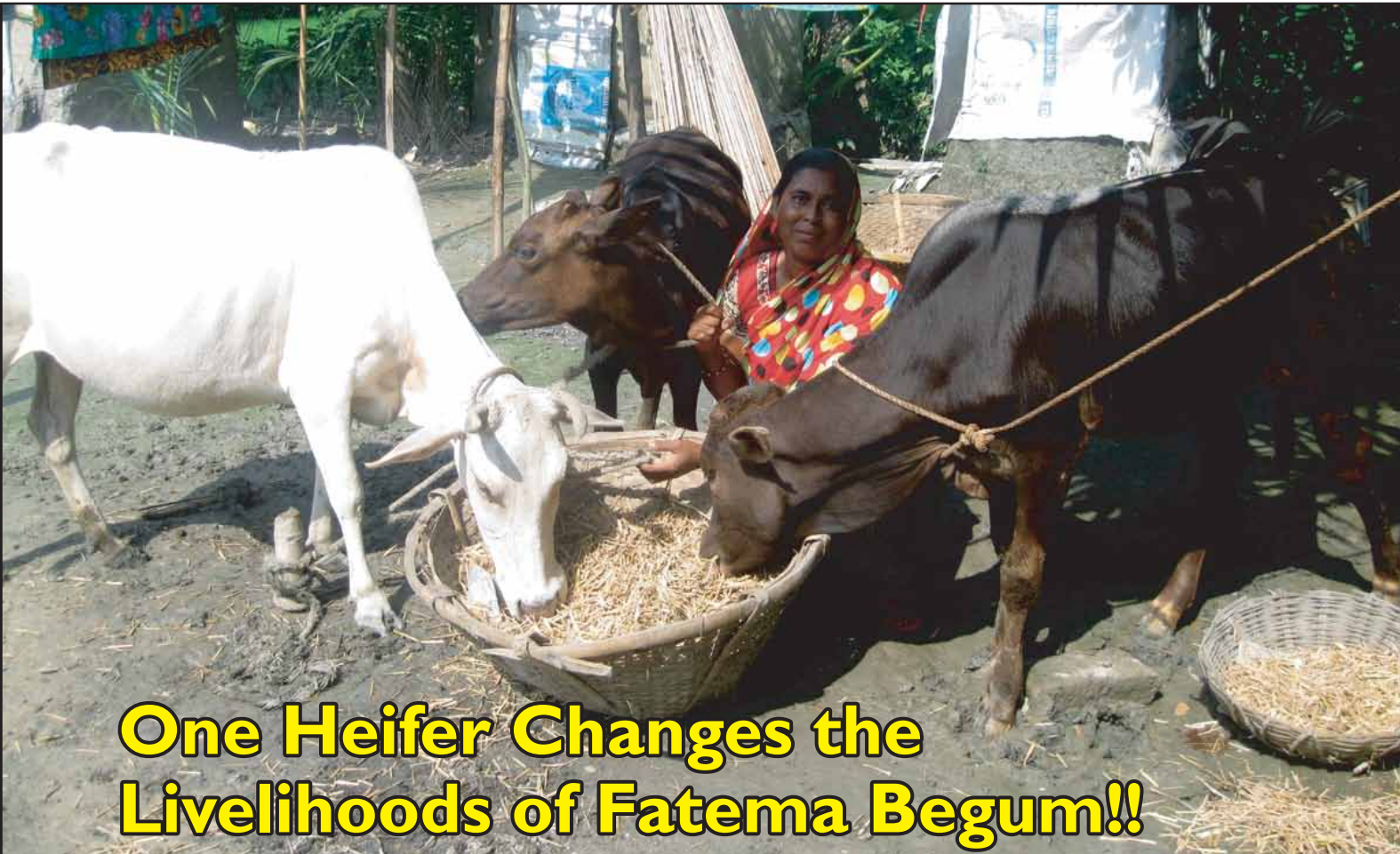
"The support was really needed, because we were not capable to make a good investment for our business. World Vision did great job by providing bamboos as our initial investment. Now we are happy enough with our increased income and business." Tripti Rani Das, Bamboo beneficiary, Jessore Sadar



By Saikat Mazumder Saurav, Training Coordinator







## One Heifer Changes the Livelihoods of Fatema Begum!!

Fatema Begum started her family life with the curse of child marriage. As they are landless and no shed, family unrest and the grief of her first daughter's death make her too deserted. Her husband's sudden marriage to another lady without informing her made her ultimate helpless in society and family as he left her breaking their 10 years long family bondage.

Being a landless Fatema begum stayed at Ellarchar Government settlement arrangement. As she has no alternatives, she started her livelihood somehow through hardship day labors. Though tough for her but she kept her only son Shanto to Child Friendly Spaces established and guided by World Vision. After graduated from CFS her son now studied in grade 2 to a Government Primary School.

In 2013, Fatema Begum is nominated as one of the most vulnerable community and provided her a heifer as IGA support. Though she had lots of limitations but she cared the heifer well and got good results within three years. Now she has 3 cows and not only this she no get 4-5 Kg milk per day that ensures her family nutrition as well she now earned much money selling the additional milk. Now she can run the family well. She is also dreaming a better future for her son.





# Life Skills Training Encourages Bangladeshi Girls to Pursue Their Education and Their Dreams



Lima, a 16-year-old slum dweller peer educator, is very happy to work for the adolescent girls of her community and her mother is really proud of her. Lima's father was an assistant (daily basis work) in judge court and her mother was a house wife. In 2012, when she was studying in grade nine, her father became severely ill and had to leave work. In order to support their family of five, her mother took a job at a shrimp factory. Her income was not sufficient to bear the education cost of Lima and her two brothers. Lima had to decide if she should sacrifice her own education so her brothers could go to school. She was aware of the suffering of her family, and thought her brothers should continue their study because they could take on the role of breadwinners. She decided that she was not destined to be educated anymore.

At this time, the Child Safety Net Project, World Vision Bangladesh started a Child Friendly Space (CFS) in Rupsha slum area. In addition to the CFS' normal activities, the project provided Life Skill Based Education (LSBE) to the adolescents of the area. Lima heard about the opportunity and decided to go to the LSBE session. After attending LSBE, Lima realised how important her education was, and decided to pursue her dream to become an engineer once more.

The adolescent girls of Rupsha Slum are very happy to receive the Life Skill Based Education. They are now confident enough to face any challenge in their daily life. Lima proved herself competent enough to become a peer educator for the community. She was provided books, educational materials and school fees from the project. Lima passed the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exam in 2014 with grade 'A+' that gave her access to a course in engineering.

Now, along with her studies, she works as a peer educator and conducts LSBE sessions for the other adolescent girls in her community. After completion of each session, Lima gets 2000 Taka (approximately \$25 USD), which helps her continue her education.

Through the LSBE training, Lima and her peers were able to stop a child marriage in the community and all of them are encouraging the parents of the community to concentrate on girls' education. "LSBE has just changed my view of life," says Lima. "I was a dreamer but LSBE has made me a winner." Lima now dreams to complete her higher education abroad and become a renowned engineer for her country.

**By Richa Silvia Biswas, Regional Advocacy & Communications Coordinator**



## Munna is Withdrawn from Exploitative Labor and Enrolled in School

Seventeen-year-old boy Munna Akon is an 11<sup>th</sup> grade meritorious student, lives with his parents in a densely populated slum in Khulna city of Southern Bangladesh. He did not have enough money and other things that he needed for schooling, which pulled him into exploitative child labor in the fish market.

World Vision's input support increased his family income and ensured them a better living. Munna became aware of a graceful life receiving 'Life Skill' education from World Vision's Child Safety Net Project in March-April, 2014. Through WV's support, his parents managed to pull him out from exploitative labor and enrolled in school. Working as a 'peer educator' with World Vision, he is preparing adolescent boys of his age for schooling, protection from exploitations and for better living.

Mohammad Mostofa Akon (41) Munna's father has been pulling rickshaw [a tricycle to haul passengers] since his migration to Khulna city from a far village of Southern coastal belt. "I was earning 150 taka (\$1.92) daily on an average from my rented rickshaw," narrates Mostofa, "I had to pay out 50 taka (\$0.64) for rental rickshaw and had insufficient income for having three meals a day for our family of four members. Sometimes we starved." Momena Begum (36), Munna's mother has been working in a shrimp processing company for nearly 15 years and hardly making 80 taka (\$1) in a day. "I hardly had work for three to four days a week based on the quantity of shrimps the factories were processing," says Momena. Hosnara (20), Munna's elder sister is married off but got divorced after two years. She lives in Dhaka capital alone and works in a garment factory to afford her only son Imam (3). Munna's parents were not earning enough to afford their family needs. "Having no other alternatives to help my parents, I pursued work in Rupsha fish market," says Munna. This fish market starts at dawn for four hours while a significant number of fishermen with trawlers reach Rupsha carrying tons of fish and shellfish from the Bay of Bengal and load off for sale to the fish merchants. "I had to work at fish market for four hours daily from early 5 o'clock in the morning loading off fish from the trawler, filling up water reservoirs by hand-pumped tubewell, washing fish, applying ice on fish and weighing fish with manual scales," says Munna. He was hardly earning 40 taka (51 cents) daily to contribute in family income. "To withdraw Munna from exploitative labor in the fish market and to enroll him in formal school, we from World Vision motivated Munna's parents and donated Mostofa a rickshaw as a means of his earning source," says Moitry Snal, a project staff.

"Owning a Rickshaw, I do not need to pay any rental and I have sufficient income for having three meals a day," Mostofa exclaims with joy, "Thanks World Vision for donating me this Rickshaw". Raising family income propelled Munna stop working in fish market. He scored 'Grade A' result in the Secondary School Certificate examination. Besides his regular studies, Munna serves in WV's Child Protection program as a 'Peer Educator' and teaches Life Skills to 15 children aged 12-17 years, something Munna learned from WV to shape up his life. "After my graduation from the University in three years, I dream to join and serve in Bangladesh Police department and look after my parents," Munna says in confidence.





# Life Skills Education Empower Girls Combating Early Marriage



A champion peer educator and meritorious student Ruma Akther (16) is educating life skills to girls who are at risk of early marriage. Ruma lives in Polashpur slum under the city of Barisal in Southern Bangladesh with her day-laborer father, housemaid mother and three younger siblings. Including Ruma, WV trains adolescents aged 12 to 16 on 'Life Skills' and educates thousands of girls through their trained 'peereducators'. Ruma reaches out 270 girls and empowers them to change their life stories.

"In search of a better living, my parents migrated to Barisal city an old port and trade center, and started working as a porter carrying basket-full of fish to load off fishing boats to market places," narrates Ruma. Ruhul Ameen (50), her father started living in slums in Barisal city with other dwellers that were migrant workers such as rickshaw pullers, transporters, hawkers, cleaners, domestic servants and menial laborers. Many people in the slums married more than two times, increased family members and became poorer. As they had no family planning and their family grew bigger, Ruhul went bad to afford food and educational expenses with his poor daily wages taka 150 (\$2) only. Due to poverty, both their first two girls- Rupa (23) and Yeasmin (19) dropped out from school and Ruhul married them off. Both the girls became mothers at their age of 15. Ruma says, "Failing to pay dowry, my sister Rupa's marriage ended up in divorce and she returned to her parents with her 4-year old daughter." Ruma was reared in slums, dropped out from school, so did her two sisters. Ruma learnt sewing from a neighbor and started contributing little in family income. World Vision's Child Safety Net Project trained 140 adolescent girls at risk of early marriage in their slums, including Ruma. Thanks to WV's Life Skills training as she internalized bad effects of being married in early age from her two sisters and said 'no' to her early marriage proposal. Ruma engaged WV's field staff and successfully motivated her parents to stop her early marriage. "Ruma's busy life started from tailoring at home and helping us financially while World Vision donated a sewing machine with tools and raw inputs including fabrics, threads, buttons, marking chalks and measuring scales, tapes," says Parul Begum (45), Ruma's mother. Being a paid peer-educator with WV, Ruma educates Life Skills to at-risk girls of her age group and helps them protecting themselves. Receiving counseling from WV's front line staff, Ruma used her remunerations and wages from tailoring work. She reenrolled in school, bought books, school supplies and paid schooling fees. Ruma also affords educational supports to her younger siblings and is able to keep them in schools. In addition, she spends her money to address miscellaneous needs for their extended family including medications for her parents.

"Ruma advocates and combats early marriage and violence against girls in and around our slums. She continues teaching life skills to adolescent girls that increased retention in schooling, reduced dropout rates and stopped early marriages within our slum," says Onu, a ninth grade student who have benefitted from Ruma's teaching.



# BANGLADESH: Child Protection Educating Girls for Life

A charismatic leader, Mohammad Farukuzzaman (51) serves as a teacher and community advocate, helping to protect his female students and other community girls from human trafficking, early marriage, and other forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. World Vision provided community based training to community leaders, journalists, marriage registrars, and teachers like Farukuzzaman who touch the lives of thousands of children in southern Bangladesh.

Farukuzzaman was born and raised in a village and studied in various cities. He returned home to teach children at a private secondary girls' school established by Mr. Anwar Hossain Manju, the Honorable Minister of Bangladesh's Ministry of Environment & Forests. Farukuzzaman has served as a teacher for 18 years. "Widely, girl children in Bhandaria community face [an] abusive environment, and [lack] access [to] education due to discriminative mindset of parents," says Farukuzzaman.

Chadni Akter, a 13-year-old student, said, "Girls ... are treated as burdens. Community believes that boys are able to support their parents at old age, but girls are not able to support their parents." For this reason, girls are mostly engaged in household chores and groomed for early marriage. Often, parents beat their daughters for minor or negligible issues. Gender biases are severe in the community.

Farukuzzaman worked initially with World Vision's Bhandaria ADP (Area Development Program) on rights-based issues. Then, World Vision's Child Protection Program trained Farukuzzaman to educate girls on child rights, child labor, anti-human trafficking and early marriage. "With World Vision's support, we have organized advocacy awareness sessions that include some debate, essay writing, documentary film shows, street drama shows and performance based education events for girls," says Farukuzzaman. Students affiliated with the Bhandaria ADP's Child Forum are trained on child rights issues. In addition, World Vision's Child Protection Program provides Life-Skills Based Education for girls through peer education.

Farukuzzaman deals and resolves issues of bullying with support from the local government's administration. He has been able to stop several early marriages and help girls continue their studies in his school. One of Farukuzzaman's 7th grade students, Moriam Akter (13) says, "Early marriage is a social disease, it spoils [the] life of a girl. A child mother becomes unable to take care of her own child, it increases rate of divorce, they [the groom's family] demand dowry, a girl dies in child birth."

Farukuzzaman says, "We have reactivated the Counter Trafficking Committee, which works as a watchdog group, and regularly collects information on [the] trafficking situation." His anti-trafficking advocacy work also involves combating early marriage, which can serve as a cover for sex and labor trafficking exploitation. He has successfully held the Chairman of the Union Council (UC) accountable to provide accurate and uncorrupted birth registration certificates of 30,000 children, thus ensuring that traffickers cannot lie about a child's age and attempt to convince marriage registrars that a child is of legal marriage age. "[This] contributes to prevent early marriage, in a great deal," says Shyamal Boral, the UC secretary.

At home, Farukuzzaman takes good care his 12-year-old daughter Mim, who has severe hearing impairments due to a childhood illness. He makes sure she has access to education, just like any other student. He models important behavior by respecting and helping his wife with cooking, washing clothes, cleaning and doing other household chores. He is changing their world, one student at a time.





# Safe Solar Lighting Contributes to Better Education

Arikul and Shumaiya are best friends, and neighbors, from a hundreds of families residing beside the rail lines, a government property of Bangladesh Railway in Jessore district, the southwestern part of Bangladesh. As two three-year old children in grade one, they both spend both their time attending their Child Friendly Space School, fetching water and playing with their friends. Additionally, as the children are both from underprivileged families, they often join their parents to help generating income. "Sometimes we pick wastes and waste foods those are thrown outside from the windows by the passengers of the running train so our families can eat," explains Arikul.

Their village is located Sharsha Upazila, by the side of the railway station, a community with a history of large population, violence, hunger and low income. As a result, infrastructure development and access to basic services, such as government's electrification facility, education, health care, remains very poor. Many families and children continue to live in extreme poverty.

Though, the land is a Bangladesh Railway property, but Arikul and Shumaiya's community is out of local government's development plan. And so, until recently, their village did not have access to electricity. While they were able to study at school in natural daylight, once darkness fell they were unable to continue their studies at home or complete their homework. Living without electricity can significantly impact the academic performance of school children, and affect their future opportunities.

To address this issue, World Vision's Child Safety Net Project under its local advocacy initiative, is working with the local Upazila administration, an autonomous government administration at sub-district level, which provides solar panels to homes and particularly for children like Arikul and Shumaiya at free of cost- and the installation of 8 solar panels in July, 2015 at Arikul's village is a case like that. The support is the success of a good rapport building between Upazila administration and World Vision as well. The panels become very helpful to the family especially for their children education. With this solar facility, each and every family is now able to use three lights and two fans for their own consumption.

Arikul says this has made a huge difference in his life: "Before I never studied at night, but now I can". "My house was remains dark at all time, I was often stayed outside the house because I do not like darkness. But now my house enlighten by the solar light. I learn to read and write from CFS and now I can practice the study at my home." he added.

Arikul and Shumaiya, as well as other children in their village, are already enjoying the benefits of these initiatives. Through the work of World Vision and local Upazila (Sub-district) Administration, they have been provided with equipment that will improve their quality of education, and give them a brighter future.

World Vision has become able to reap the seeds of their dreams in children and now the children are dreaming to be police officers, doctors and teachers in future. The supported families are very grateful to CSNP and to the Upazila administration well.



# BANGLADESH: Child protection Habibur's Reporting Builds Safety for Children

Habibur, 19, is a bright student and a determined news reporter. This is remarkable considering the challenges he's faced. At the age of two, Habibur's father left him, his older sister and his mother. Since then, Habibur's mother Taslima has worked full time as a cloth peddler while raising her two children. Through the World Vision Sponsorship Program, Habibur became a sponsored child when he was in grade 4. One of his cousins enrolled Habibur in a Madrasah, an Islamic school, where Habibur excelled, completing Dakhil (secondary school level) and Alim (higher secondary level) with 'A' credits and enrolling in Fazil (Bachelor of Arts level).

World Vision's Kotalipara Area Development Program (ADP) provided Habibur with school books and school fees, as well as a desk and chair for him to use while studying at home. In addition, Habibur's family received roofing materials from World Vision, which they used to thatch their house. To help expand the family business, World Vision provided Taslima with clothes and fabrics that raised her daily sales and afforded a three-fold increase in her income.

World Vision staff recognized Habibur's leadership skills and invited him to join the Kotalipara ADP Child Forum. As the newly elected chairperson, he now leads the Central Child Forum Committee, which oversees 17 forums and more than 2000 sponsored children. Habibur's leadership skills have continued to grow with his attendance at different World Vision programs, such as 'Disaster Preparedness', 'Water, Sanitation and Hygiene', and a health awareness campaign. An exposure trip to a World Vision project was a turning point in Habibur's life. Reflecting on the trip, he began writing and publishing poems, stories, and local news articles. Taking note of his writing talent, World Vision's Child Protection Program chose Habibur as an 'advocate' and offered him training on 'Child Journalism'. The training stimulated Habibur and he started writing news reports. An editor found Habibur's draft news reports and helped register him as reporter with a local newspaper, Doinik Bastob Ghotona.

"Habibur is a well known person among the local reporters and gets his news media hit almost in every week," says Kabir Uddin, a project staff. "For a good reporter, honesty is a must," says Habibur. "At least 130 of my news reports have already been published on children's meeting, child forum activities, national campaigns, social issues, World Vision's program news and recent incidents." He also has 50 poems, two short stories, and a novel that are awaiting publication. Habibur dreams of joining the Bangladesh Police after graduation. "World Vision has shaped up my life, thanks to [the] journalism training that made me what I am today," says Habibur.

"World Vision provided us shelter, schooling fees, books, and means of income and made our lives much better." Taslima is running her business well and earning at least 250 taka (\$3.24) per day. For surviving confidently in such rigorous poverty, the Government of Bangladesh granted her the "Joyeeta", a national award of honor.





## Bangladesh Child Protection: Badar Uddin Protects Minor Girls from Getting Married

Throughout his twelve-year services in 'social service', sixty-three year old Badar Uddin develops his leadership skills, becomes very popular and is elected member in Union Council [local government]. WorldVision's advocacy training capacitates him becoming an advocate on child protection including human trafficking, early marriage and child labor. Badar Uddin's advocacy protects largely the community from trafficking/modern slavery, prevents girls from being ruined by early marriage, and awards children favorable environment to grow in stature. For a living,



father of three Badar Uddin sells or supplies bricks and sands since he got married in 1978. "My ancestors' traits and reputation inspired me to get involved into social works," says Badar Uddin. He started supporting poor people financially for paying medical bills, schooling fees and wedding expenses for unassuming parents. "Under neighbors' affirmation, I competed in public election and was elected as Union Council (UC) member in 2011," says Badar Uddin. In his ward [administrative unit of Union Council], he moderates 8000 villagers, creates awareness on citizen rights and responsibilities, keeps law-enforcement in order and executes government's rural development agendas at grass root level. "To make my ward a model, I lead villagers to hold ward meetings and determine social issues like dowry, child labor and early marriages," narrates Badar Uddin. "As civil laws dictates, the minimum legal age for marriage 18 for women and 21 for men in Bangladesh, there were evidences in his community that the parents of minor girls or boys did consent to the union; though marrying off minors was a criminal offence. The average age for women getting married in Badar Uddin's area was 16 years of age," says Zakia, a frontline WV staff. "To determine the validity of a marriage, parents influence UC members in an unfair way to issue birth registration certificate with increase age of the minors. I realized that young women are more prone to becoming victims of early marriages conjugal mismatches, abuses, separations, divorces, deaths on childbirths and suicides," narrates Badar Uddin.

"Badar Uddin's Union Council has built partnerships with WV and other organizations to implement a series of social awareness activities on early marriage, birth registration, child labor and anti-human trafficking," says Zakia. To ensure practical social services, he got involved with public and private schools, vocational schools and some non-governmental organizations. He got involved in the Counter Trafficking Committee, the government's efforts to combat human trafficking. "Badar Uddin received training from WV on Advocacy for preventing early marriage, child labor, anti-human-trafficking and other social issues affecting children's lives," adds Zakia. "Recently I have stopped an early marriage of Shanjida\*, a fifteen-year girl, engaging public administration, law-enforcement officials and social elites," affirms Badar Uddin. One of Shanjida's classmates used to tease her and became mad to marry her off. Badar Uddin came to know that either parties did consent to the union and took preparation for wedding. Badar Uddin had no other choices but called for police that suspended the wedding. He educates the community on the consequences of early marriage, child labor and human trafficking.







He encourages parents to keep sending their girls to schools, unless they affirm fitness for their lives. "I motivate my peers to comply with citizen charter and influence them not to issue any fake birth registration certificate to protect girls from getting married before 18," says Badar Uddin. "I also saved Mizanur Rahman a forty-year old day laborer from being trafficked to Malaysia, who sold his farmland and paid off 60000 taka (\$780) as the fifty percent of his travel costs. The traffickers allured Mizanur for a better job with pleasing salary but did not issue VISA, work permits and appointment letter as evidences of his employment," narrates Badar Uddin. Media reports that traffickers ship Bangladeshi migrants to Malaysia, lodge them to 'waiting area' of secret jungle camps against their will, takes hefty ransoms from their relatives, before they were sneaked through the border into Malaysia.

Being motivated by Badar Uddin, the families living in poverty with unstable or non-existent income sources do not see a daughter both as an economic burden and do not agree a daughter be married in minor age to take off financial strain of the family. As he continues fighting system corruption, the 'Birth Registration' process is digitalized by the government and brought under internet online certification and no one can trade fake certificate now. Adolescent girls learnt to refuse a marriage proposal. Young children learnt to fight back traffickers, refuse to take food or materials offered by any stranger and report to their parents immediately. "Thanks WV for providing me advocacy training which inspired me to work hard and protect children in my community," Badar Uddin expresses gratitude.

**\*Alias to protect victim's identity**  
**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**





# BANGLADESH: Child Protection

## Nazmun Nahar Leverages World Vision's Support



"My dream is to give [the] best protection to every child in my working area and the anti-trafficking legislation will fully be implemented soon," says Nazmun Nahar. Nazmun works as a Women & Children Affairs Officer for the Government of Bangladesh. Through this role, she has formed a partnership with WVB Child Protection Program. Through World Vision's partnership, she enforced the government's anti human-trafficking awareness program, built safety nets for children and women at risk, and saved lives of trafficked victims.

The Bangladesh government has built partnerships, like the one with World Vision, to implement a series of anti-human-trafficking activities. Counter Trafficking Committees (CTCs) became the driving force and change agent of the government's efforts to accelerate the motivational, preventive and awareness-building activities against human trafficking. World Vision became a partner in this alliance, in particular the Debhata CTC.

As the Member Secretary of the Debhata CTC, Nazmun has worked closely with World Vision's Child Protection program. Because of World Vision's involvement, this CTC holds regular monthly meetings, launches advocacy programs, and assists trafficked survivors. This partnership effort gives better protection to the women and children in the Debhata area. "I focus on implementing [the] Government's outlined series of awareness raising activities, meetings, campaigns and special-ized trainings on anti-human-trafficking for CTC key stake-holders, government officials, police officials, border guard officials, lawyers, social service officials, teachers, religious teachers (imams) and local elites," says Nazmun. She shared that World Vision helped the CTC to hold regular monthly meetings, strengthen agency partnerships and conduct awareness raising activities on the Bride Not Before 18 campaign that prevents early marriage. They used lawn meetings (public awareness meetings) to orient stakeholders on anti-trafficking legislation.

Under Nazmun's strong leadership, Debhata CTC received positive local support and quickly became a change agent within the territory. With a caring heart, she enlisted people at risk of being trafficked into the "Vulnerable Group Development" program under the government. She links people in this program to the technical and vocational training opportunities offered by the Government.

These initiatives have boosted protection to the communities. "Recently, Nazmun Nahar helped me to defend against traffickers and win a criminal case," says Asma Begum, 48, a CTC member who saved Debashi\*, 14, a girl that was trafficked to the Indian border-crossing. Another attempt by the traffickers went in vain when Asma rescued two girls, 14 & 15, both 8th grade students who were taken from their school to the Bhatsala border area. The CTC initiated now campaigns on social issues like dowry, early marriage, child labor and violence against children and women, all for the protection of those at risk.

**\*Alias to protect victim's identity**  
**By George Sarkar, Manager - Donor Relations**





# Contribution from Different Stakeholders

During the project intervention Government cooperation and coordination is a mentionable strength for this project. Top level Go officials such as Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Upazila(Sub-district) Nirbahi Officer, Women & Children Affairs Officers, Social Welfare, Local Government and Civil Society leaders visited CSP programs especially Child Friendly Spaces. Observing the exceptional changes among the children, knowing their family situation they contributed a lot for this project especially support for children education, health care and basic needs. Overwhelming the children performances they provided school dress, books, solar panel, Electric Fans, Birth day Gifts and token . This creates positive impressions among children, encourage them more for learning, made them visioning and build confident to be a better citizen in future.







## Recognition & Appreciation

As a child focus project, the Child Safety Net Project has initiated its development work for a long time on awareness rising on human trafficking prevention and deterrence, survivor repatriation, rehabilitation and eliminates social injustice. Naturally, in such hard work, getting success or receiving any recognition is not so easy. But the dedicated staff of the project, live and farsighted leadership and overall under the competent leadership of WVB Khulna Region and National, the project achieve success especially and one of them is to "enhance and strengthen government organizational process" through advocacy. Through these initiatives, the project created influence to take decision to relevant authority to make activate and functional of 46 Counter Trafficking Committee (CTC) of District, Sub-district and Union level under Khulna working region. As a result most of the Union Parishad and Sub-district level child protection and human trafficking level initiatives got more pace. Capacity of CTC members are enhanced through capacity building. Recently an open competition organized nation wide by World Vision Bangladesh and Child Safety Net Project awarded First Position under impact category, and the focus was to "Strengthening Community Based Child Protection Mechanism and System Development." No doubt this is a great success of this project.

To prevent and deterrence human trafficking the project is working with deep cooperation with Ministry of Home Affairs, Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Integration (RRRI) Cell, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and including with Law Enforcement Agencies as- Police, BGB etc. The project also got recognition for this cooperation. The Human Trafficking related report of CSNP was published in Bangladesh Country Report-Combating Human Trafficking by Ministry of Home Affairs since 2012. This is the highest level recognition from government side.

Besides this, the project also received Honorary Membership for Human Trafficking Coordination Cell formed by Range DIG Office-Khulna, Bangladesh Police. As an associated of Government i.e. LEAs this is an exceptional example of success as well this shows the evidence of partnership through advocacy. The project also bears national and international specialty, since its inception, there are more than Forty International Publications published in WVB global page and all these honored it a successful project.



# Study on Child Friendly Space

One University professional conducted a research report on CFS with exceptional information about the program success.

World Vision has initiated the Child Safety Net Project (CSNP) in Bangladesh to reducing vulnerability through prevention of violence, developing protection mechanism, restoration of survivors and advocacy at all stakeholder levels. Child Friendly Space (CFS) is one prevention approach of CSNP by which vulnerable children are given the support to have a safe environment to survive and thrive. CFSs are designed and operated in a participatory manner where children meet other children to play, interact and learn in a supervised environment. CSNP operates 20 CFSs in nine districts of Bangladesh. To evaluate the effectiveness of CFSs in context of Bangladesh a study was conducted within the CFS community.

Among 20 CFSs, a sample of 9 CFSs of six districts were taken to assess the effectiveness of the CFSs based on the child development scenario of two age groups: 3 to 5 and 6 to 12 and tried to show the comparative changes between the CFSs and the CFSs area. The overall changes were looked considering the child, family and community level. CFSs operated from CSNP provide support to 775 children in Bangladesh, roughly 40 in every CFS. In the CFSs children are supervised by a caregiver where they play, interact and learn. CFSs are located mostly in low income settlements where it is striven by the project to ensure participation of the community. Evaluation on child development among the children of CFSs area and non-CFSs area was conducted to assess their language and communication skill, psychological wellbeing, sanitary & hygiene practices, behavior, general knowledge and it was revealed that children demonstrated superior performance of the CFS area than non-CFS area.

Parents in the CFS areas have higher working hour and income. At the same time, they have more time to spend in leisure because of having their children in the safe CFS environment. The improvement of attitude was reported by 94% households in CFS areas but 17% in non-CFS areas. Hygiene practice of the households in the CFS area is 63% but 17% in the non-CFS areas. Instances of child labor was higher in non CFS areas 99% than in CFS areas 81%. Child trafficking was reported by 67% communities in the non-CFS but 52% in CFS areas.

## Study on Child Friendly Spaces (CFS)

Md. Shariful Islam





# Special Research by WVUK

Famous UK researcher Mr. Jonathan for his international assignment visited our CFS and met some beneficiary & produce reports with extra ordinary findings.

## Reaching out to child labourers through children's centres.

Some World Vision national offices have established children's centres in communities where children are vulnerable to a variety of protection concerns. These centres can take different forms according to local needs, but essentially they enable children and young people to meet their peers to play, learn to deal with risks, take part in educational activities and relax in a safe place. In this way, they can play an integral part in preventing child labour, as well as in protecting child workers from even greater harm. The centres also enable child workers to access non-formal education, where they can continue to build literacy skills despite dropping out of school.

In Khulna, Bangladesh, for example, 20 children's centres have been set up to cater for working children, as well as children who have dropped out of school, children whose parents are sex workers (two have been located near brothel areas), unattended children, disabled children and children from very poor families. One children's centre, located in the Rupsha slum community in Bangladesh, is a multi-purpose space that provides 25 pre-school education places in the mornings for boys and girls aged three to five years old. These children would otherwise be left unattended or with their older siblings while their parents work. This facility not only protects unattended children, but helps to create an expectation of education amongst them, whilst giving parents confidence in the potential for their children to succeed. Afternoon coaching support with homework is also provided for six to twelve year-olds, along with evening and weekend life skills-based education for community boys and girls aged between 13 and 18. The children's centre also acts as a venue for cultural and sporting activities as well as efforts to support basic health education.

"This [child friendly centre] has really helped us. We used to be worried about our small children when we went out to work, but it has reduced our tension as we know they are being looked after" (parent, Rupsha slum community, Bangladesh). JANUARY 2015



# Visitors' Comments

A number of prominent visitors visited this project shows the importance and impacts of this project. Of the visitors - WWI President, SAPRO Leader, WV US& CANADA President, US Program Officers, Veteran Pres Byterian church leader, Different donors around the world came to this project. Their comments impress the project staff to work more dedication as well create nice experience to our beneficiaries , especially the children. Some of their comments encrypted below -

Visitor's name and address	Comments	Signature and date
KEVIN JENKINS LONDON, UK	Thank you for your inspirational work on behalf of the most vulnerable children of this country.	Ki Jenkins 7/2/2014
Perkash Singh Regional Office	a great visit and awaiting to see the impact of our work	Perkash 7/2/14
NIGEL MARSH SOMERSET, UK	MAY GOD BLESS YOU + BE WITH YOU ALWAYS	Nigel Marsh 7/2/14
REENA VOHRA TORONTO, CANADA	I am inspired and encouraged by the work that you do. Thank you for sharing with me. May God continue to bless you in all that you for the children	Reena Vohra MARCH 17, 2014





# Visitors' Comments

Visitor's name and address	Comments	Signature and date
Rich Stearns	INSPIRING WORK! MANY NEW FRIENDS. GOD IS USING YOU!	 11/14/14
Laura Brannon MN	It has been a pleasure to spend two weeks with your team. Thank you for implementing the CPL with great passion & integrity. Thank you for investing so much time, creativity, & good humor in the way Interne ELO Design unfolded!! Thank you most of all for your friendship & hospitality. <sup>God bless you and your family!</sup>	Janeen Lueke Greene NOV 5/15
Andy Munro	I loved seeing the work & impact WD is having on Bangladesh! Our hosts were very hospitable. Thank you for inviting us!	 5/25/16
Gargna Vidhokori - W. Haven Canada	Beautiful children, great work!	





## Conclusion

Story is the reflection of life. It is the embedded scenario of rolling lives. We get the past pictures through the writings of present time. Keeping Child Protection in mind, the initiatives which creates positive changes among beneficiaries or who played special role to implement the project or the matters which impacted more for the project of them the selected stories are enlisted in this impact book. Especially the trafficked survivor, Child Friendly Space children, adolescent beneficiary of Life Skill Base Education, successful IGA initiators and their family, Counter Trafficking Committee initiatives, child journalists, success of advocacy, contribution of GO NGOs, appreciation and recognition of project by others, donor and visitors, partnerships, national and international publication and professional success of project staff are described here both Bengali and English language. Highest cautious initiatives are taken in to translation so that the main themes are not eloped. Most of the stories mentioned in this book are already published in WV global pages or websites. So every story is developed by expert writer in artistic manner. Survivors' confidentiality is highly maintained; pseudonyms are used in each and every case.

As a change story each specific story reflected the past to present journey of beneficiary. Especial emphasis are given to survivors struggle, supports and strategy from World Vision, reintegration with family and afterwards. Future sustainability are kept in focus. This book will create a numerous innovative thoughts and also inspire them to work more for the most vulnerable people of our community.









