

Chetona

(Community based Care and Protection

for Children of Sex Workers and Children Affected by AIDS)

Background:

In Bangladesh, children of sex workers (ChSWs) and children affected by AIDS (CABA) are some of the most-at-risk and vulnerable groups.

These children are largely stigmatized within their communities and are denied basic rights and protection. Largely residing in rural Bangladesh, many are not receiving appropriate care from their parents or extended families due to poverty, lack of information and limited access to services.

Project Objectives:

The project aims to achieve three objectives:

Objective 1: Systems strengthening:

Strengthen national and community level child protection systems to increase protection for CABA and ChSWs.

Objective 2: Improving access to services:

CABA and ChSWs have improved access to basic and protective services that reduce their vulnerabilities to violence, abuse and exploitation.

Objective 3: Building protective communities:

Community members have the skills and confidence (including CABA and ChSWs) to access the government child protection system, and stigma/discrimination at the community level towards CABA and ChSWs is reduced.

Geographical Coverage: Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajbari and Khulna.

Implementing partners:

ChSW component –Durjoy Nari Sangha (DNS), Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition (BWHC) and Save the Children Direct Implementation (Health, Nutrition & HIV/AIDS and Child Protection).

CABA component – Ashar Alo Society (AAS), Mukto Akash Bangladesh (MAB).

Project duration: Pilot Phase: July 2012 - July 2014, Implementation phase: August 2014 - July 2017

Funded by: Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT, Australian Government) & Save the Children Australia.

Target Groups



Children affected by HIV and children of sex workers



Caregivers



Community Facilitators



Teachers



Community Stakeholders, Service Providers



Parents



School Management Committee (SMC) members



Child Protection Committee members



Government Officials

Major Achievements :

- CABA and ChSWs are gaining skills to protect themselves from violence and abuse.
- Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) created job opportunities for ChSWs.
- Parents/caregivers/mothers are becoming aware on child protection issues and changing their interactions with children in a positive way.
- Community people, teachers, School Management Committee members, neighbours and relatives are sensitized on child protection and child rights; Community Based Child Protection Committee (CBCPC) members are responding to child protection concerns.
- Multi-disciplinary professional groups (consisted of government representatives from Women and Children Affairs, Health, Education, and Social Welfare Department) are taking initiatives to ensure child friendly services in a non-discriminatory environment.

Major Challenges:

- Meeting the demand for basic services (e.g. health, nutrition, education, livelihoods) for CABA and ChSWs.
- Scattered/isolated geographical locations of CABA and their families, which makes program implementation expensive.
- Unwillingness of HIV positive people to disclose their status to their children.

Future Direction:

- Continue advocacy to ensure access to livelihoods, nutrition, health, and education services for ChSWs, CABA and their families; increase their access to social protection schemes.
- Policy advocacy related to CABA and ChSWs on alternative care.

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“Earlier, I did not have any knowledge on child development, child rights, and child protection. I learned a lot from Chetona project. I shall share these messages with the children of my community. Chetona project has given me an opportunity to act as a member of the CBCPC. This has opened a new avenue in my life, and is providing me inspiration to live. I want to live longer among the children through my contribution towards them”

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- Girl infected by HIV.

