

Inclusive Protection and Empowerment Project for Children with Disabilities (IPEP)

Background:

Children with Disabilities (CWDs) are almost four times more vulnerable to all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation than non-disabled children. Bangladesh has an estimated 7-10 million CWDs (out of a total of 72 million children). This group of children is often reported as a burden to their family; they are subject to violence, neglect and abuse, including high levels of stigma and discrimination. They are institutionalized at a significantly higher rate than other children – often in institutions without standards for quality of care. This results in CWDs being pushed out of protective structures, left with a feeling of disempowerment and lack of self-confidence. Moreover, there are major gaps in policies for this group of children, limited awareness and skills among caregivers and professionals about the vulnerabilities of CWDs, few targeted programmes and limited research focusing on this specific group of children.

Project Objective:

To contribute to protection of CWDs in Bangladesh from all forms of violence.

Specific Objective 1: CWDs have skills to protect themselves against violence, and caregivers and service providers have skills to detect, prevent, challenge and respond to violence against CWDs at home, in the community, in school and in care institutions.

Specific Objective 2: CWDs who are survivors of violence have increased access to quality services.

Specific Objective 3: Strengthened national policy frameworks and adoption of good practice.

Geographical Coverage: Dhaka, Sylhet, Barisal, Rangpur and Gaibanda districts

Implementing Partners: Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), Centre for Services and Information on Disabilities (CSID) and National Forum of Organizations Working with Disabilities (NFOWD)

Donor: European Union and Save the Children Denmark

Duration: February 1, 2014-January 31, 2017

Target Groups



10,000 Children with Disabilities



6000 Children without disabilities



14,000 Caregivers of CWDs



80 Community Facilitators



1,000 Teachers



65 School Management Committee (SMC) members



80 Staff and managers of 16 residential institutions



50 Disability Resource Persons



300 Police Officers



200 Legal professionals



110 Community Based Child Protection Committee members



170 Government Officials.

Major Achievements:

- Save the Children Denmark's generic resilience building module has been adapted for CWDs in Bangladesh context in Bengali .
- Resilience training has been rolled out for CWDs, parents/caregivers; CWDs are no longer feeling the isolation they have experienced before, and are able to protect themselves from abuse.
- Trained teachers, School Management Committee members, lawyers, police etc., which is contributing to bringing attitudinal changes regarding CWDs.

Major Challenges:

- Arranging resilience building training of children with different types of disabilities.
- Addressing the special needs and realizing the potential of CWDs are often at the bottom of the priority list of the families and communities.
- The overall child protection and welfare system in Bangladesh has not adequately addressed challenges faced by CWDs, and as a result resource allocation is very limited.

Future Direction:

- Promotion of resilience building of CWDs.
- Policy advocacy for disability inclusive social protection schemes.
- Implementation of United Nations minimum standards of care in residential institutes.

“

When other children or people in the community would discriminate or bully me earlier, I used not to protest, I just took it and then ran home. Now, I know they have no right to do so. I have started to protest if that happens

”

Rakib

- Boy (14 years) with hearing impairment, Barisal

