

SSS

Sushikha O Susasther Mahdhomy Surokkha/

Protection through better education and better health

Background:

In Bangladesh children of sex workers are deprived of their basic rights and face different types of violence. The children living inside the brothels are the worst sufferers. They are exposed to early sexuality, subject to physical, psychological abuse and maltreatment. Sex workers and their children face stigma and discrimination in the community.

Children of sex workers usually do not have access to health and education; they are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Daughters of sex workers are at risk of getting involved in sex work. Girls are trafficked to brothel. Save the Children started to work on the protection of the children (especially girls) of sex workers in Daulatdia brothel, and implemented Safe Home and *Aparajito* projects. The interventions have evolved to an integrated program involving Child Protection, Education, and Health, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS sectors.

Project Objectives:

Strategic objective 1: Capacity building and awareness raising - increase awareness and strengthen capacity of children, their parents, caregivers, duty bearers and society at large to make the duty bearers accountable for realization of the rights of children living in brothels.

Strategic objective 2: Access to service - increase availability of and access to comprehensive and quality services for children living in brothels, which includes education, health and protection.

Strategic objective 3: Strengthen community based mechanism - strengthen the existing mechanisms related to health, education, and protection to make those functional.

Strategic objective 4: Advocacy - contribute to a positive policy/legislative environment for children living in brothels and influence various organizations in scaling up child sensitive interventions in all brothels of Bangladesh.

Target beneficiaries: Children living in the brothels, institutional care setting and their parents/caregivers, community people and government services providers.

Geographical Coverage: Daulatdia, Rajbari district and Sadar Upzila, Faridpur district.

Implementation partners: Karmojibi Kallayan Sangstha(KKS), Mukti Mohila Samity(MMS) and Shapla Mohila Sangstha (SMS).

Project duration: July 2015 - June 2018.

Funded by: Save the Children Korea

Target Groups



Children of sex workers



Caregivers



Community Facilitators



Teachers



Sex workers



School Management Committee (SMC) members



Child Protection Committee members



Government Officials

Major Achievements:

- Children of sex workers are able to access health, education (including Early Childhood Development) and protection services.
- Children living in institution (Safe Home) have been reintegrated with families/communities through education and job placement; several of them are working with Save the Children and partner NGOs as staff members.
- Children are empowered through participation in Child Club activities.
- Advocacy with community based groups and local administration helped in creating a protective environment for children; there are attitudinal changes regarding the rights of children of sex workers.
- Government mandated Anti-trafficking Committees were activated to rescue girls trafficked to brothels with support from law enforcement agencies.

Major Challenges:

- National level policy framework is not adequate to provide required support and services to the children of sex workers who are living without appropriate care.
- It is a challenge to induce protective behavior among the adolescents living with their mothers in brothels.

Future Direction:

- Influence various organizations in scaling up child sensitive interventions in all brothels of Bangladesh.
- Conduct advocacy on policy and legislative issues related to children of sex workers.

“Life in the brothel was unbearable, the uncertainty and disgrace touched my thoughts. I am now a Counsellor. The work is rewarding and I am able to help many women and children. Community people, adolescent members of Child Club address me as “Counsellor Apa (Sister)”. Safe Home helped me to get this professional identity and honor”.

- Girl (21 years) who resided in Safe Home

