



CHILDREN and **RESILIENCE**



A Collection of Success Stories from the
Humanitarian Sector, Bangladesh

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Save the Children

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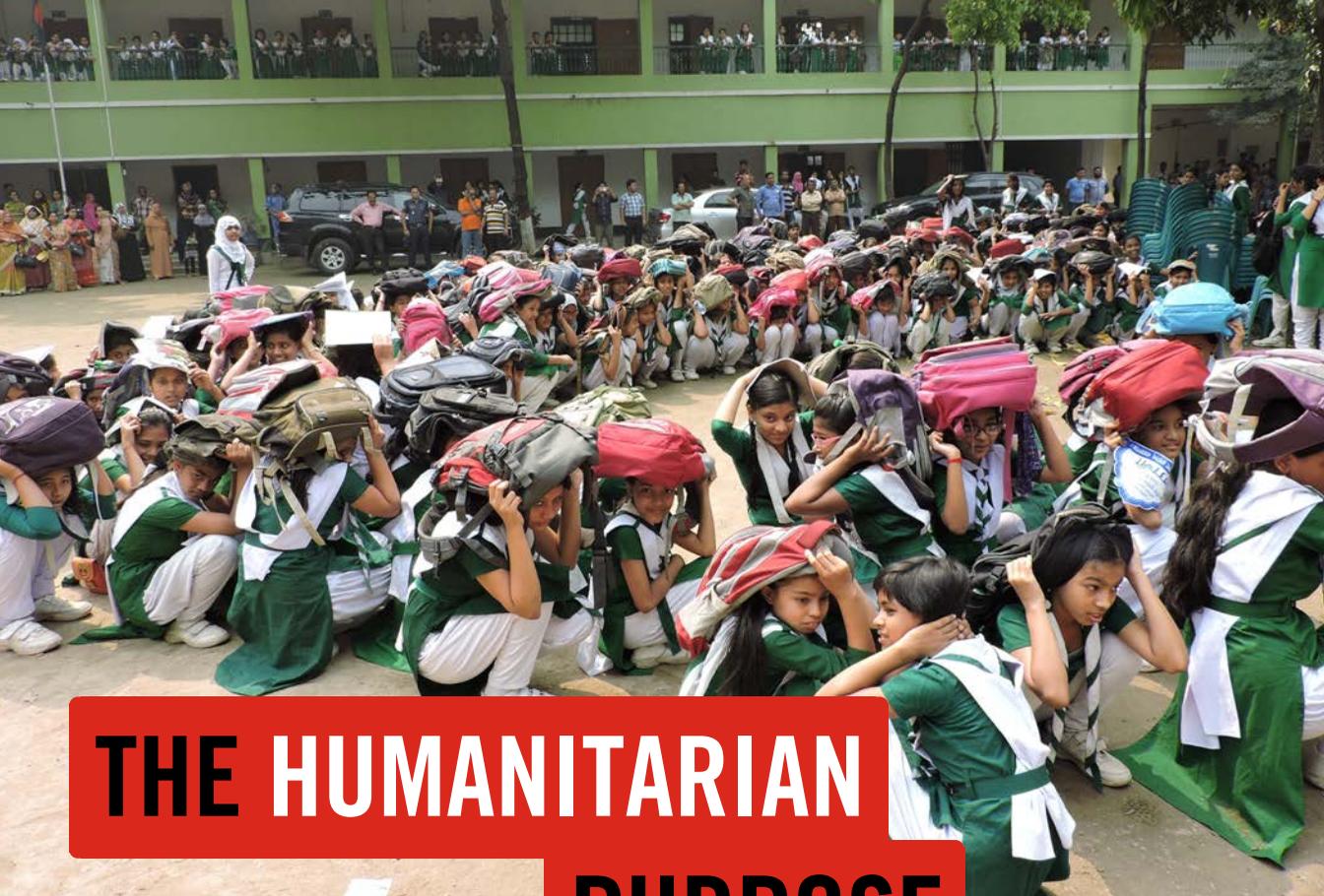
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THE HUMANITARIAN PURPOSE

Disaster preparedness and risk reduction play a major role in preventing the loss of lives and livelihoods during disasters. Directly and with partners, Save the Children has been preparing vulnerable communities for natural disasters and works with the government, communities and children to build capacity on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and effective humanitarian response. We mounted major responses to disaster starting from the 1970 cyclone to the recent floods in southeast and northwest locations, and we have the capacity to respond to any disaster which puts children at risk. By co-leading the education cluster, leading the ECB consortium, and the humanitarian talent development project, Save the Children plays a vital role in advocating disaster management policies, developing new humanitarian professionals and ensuring continued education in emergencies for affected children.

Save the Children as the humanitarian and development organisation is committed to reducing children's and their care giver's vulnerability to humanitarian crisis, ensuring their right to survival and development.



CHILDREN AS **ACTIVE AGENTS** IN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Most of the climate change impacts in Bangladesh are likely to come from the south—that is, the Bay of Bengal and the adjoining North Indian Ocean. These waters are the sources of tropical cyclones and storm surges, coastal erosion, monsoon winds and rainfall, floods, and droughts. Climate change affects children severely. Children are at a greater risk of injuries, death, displacement, loss of guardians and post-traumatic stress due to climate change. In addition, climate change threatens children’s development through decreased access to food, water, health care and education; increased exposure to abuse and violence; and increased prevalence of vector-borne diseases and acute respiratory infections.

Though the impact of climate change on children is severe and diverse, climate change assessment and adaptation plans rarely consider children’s vulnerabilities or their specific needs and priorities. It is, however, extremely imperative to include a child’s perspective and integrate children’s specific needs and priorities in a child centred approach that recognises the roles and rights of children as citizens and agents for change in climate change adaptation policies and plans, since the population of children comprises about half of the population of Bangladesh. Save the Children International strongly believes that addressing climate change induced risks, consequences and the underlying causes can reduce the impact of climate change on children’s survival, development and protection, particularly when children themselves are at the centre of that effort.

There are scattered interventions from government and non-government agencies to increase resilience against the effects of climate change. There is still a significant lack of effort to address climatic vulnerabilities. Children are merely seen as passive victims of climactic disaster and their potential to bring resilience is rarely explored. Today’s children are tomorrow’s leaders and can play a vital role to bring broader community resilience. In Save the Children’s climate change and disaster risk reduction projects, children have been demonstrating strong potential as agents of change and the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) projects have benefitted from increased child participation. Furthermore, community people appreciated the systematic analysis of community risks and resources presented by children. However, children’s participation in CCA and DRR debates still remains limited and children’s rights to adaptation assistance are poorly understood. The major lessons learned from existing projects that involved children are that:

- Children act as identifiers, analysers and planners of risk reduction, and can bring innovative approaches to raise awareness for a more resilient community.

- Communities appreciate the role of children, especially in presenting risk reduction action plans in a structured way that would benefit not only children, but also the wider community.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION (CCA) PROJECT

1st July 2012 > 31st July 2017



Bangladesh...

...is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, with a regular cycle of floods, storms and cyclones affecting different parts of the country. The Global Climate Risk Index (GCRI) 2013 placed Bangladesh 4th in the world, with 824,000 deaths in the 1991-2010 period, and the largest number of events (274) of any country in the world. The GCRI 2013 also goes on to say that the most remarkable thing is that Bangladesh is no longer in the top three countries due to substantial improvement in the adaptive capacity, and that Bangladesh is now one of the leaders in adapting to climate change.

Purpose?

The purpose of the project is to strengthen community resilience through an increased ability to anticipate, plan for and adapt to climate change impacts, with the support of local and national government systems in Bangladesh.



Funding

AUD 1,824,965



Partner organisations



Key Objectives

1

Objective 1: The climate change adaptive capacities of children, caregivers and communities are increased through the Climate Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (CVCA) process.

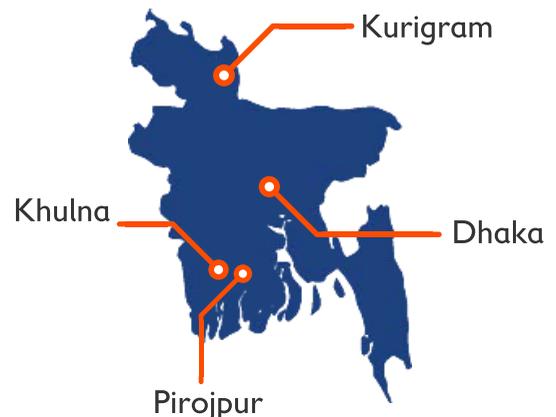
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Objective 2: The capacity and ability of local government institutions/systems and CSOs is strengthened to support communities in responding to the impacts of climate change at the local level.

3

Objective 3: Climate resilient development approaches at the community, union, upazila, district and national levels are strengthened through advocacy.

Project Locations





Beneficiaries

→ DIRECT:

2012	Children 3,000 Caregivers 2,000
Projected 2017	Children 6,000 Caregivers 4,800

↪ INDIRECT:

100,000 including community people and other stakeholders, over 5 years

STAKEHOLDERS

- WDMC (Ward Disaster Management Committee)
- SDMC (School Disaster Management Committee)
- UDMC (Union Disaster Management Committee)
- UzDMC (Upazilla Disaster Management Committee)
- DDMC (District Disaster Management Committee)
- CCDMC (City Corporation Disaster Management Committee)
- DDM (Department of Disaster Management)
- Likeminded NGOs/Academic Institutions/CSOs/BCAs/ARCAB



Project Activities

Under objective 1:

- Training for children clubs on CC-CVCA (Child Centred Climate Vulnerability Capacity Assessment), DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction) integration and adaptation plans
- Children conduct CC-CVCA in the community
- Courtyard sessions to raise awareness on CCA
- School sessions for schoolchildren to raise awareness on CCA
- Theatre For Development (TFD) for mass awareness.

Under objective 2:

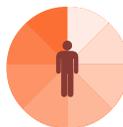
- Child facilitated community meetings with Union Disaster Management Committees to prepare adaptation plans
- Safety net programme workshops with Union Disaster Management Committees.

Under objective 3:

- Workshop with local agriculture, livestock, health and fisheries departments to recommend climate adaptations
- Children initiated to develop household-level adaptation plans based on recommendations from local government institutions.



Intended Outcomes



- Children and community members have increased knowledge on climate change and how to anticipate, plan for and adapt to impacts.
- Children and community members/care-givers utilise appropriate skills in implementing local-level climate adaptation actions.
- Union and Ward Disaster Management Committee members and CSOs have an increased understanding of climate change, local adaptation capacities and needs.
- Union/ward-level final CRA (Community Risk Assessment)/URA (Urban Risk Assessment) includes references to CVCA findings and tools.
- Targeted government officials and CSO stakeholders are informed of CC-CCA actions and tools.
- Government and CSO stakeholders are empowered to implement CC-CCA actions and tools.



BANGLADESH IN AN URBAN CONTEXT

Today, more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas. That, coupled with the impact of climate change, disaster risk reduction in urban and peri-urban areas has become more significant than ever. The number of people exposed to disasters increases as more people concentrate in those disaster prone areas. Haphazard and unplanned settlements in urban areas are immensely vulnerable to natural hazards such as earthquakes, fire, water logging, building collapse, hazardous waste and disease. Countries with large populations are in the extreme category when looking at the average number of people at risk in absolute terms.

Those living in slums – especially children and women – are often burdened by poverty, insecure living arrangements, lack of basic services and poor implementation of legislative provision for employment, housing and disaster safety. Negligence, deprivation, and inappropriate resources make women and children predominantly the most vulnerable ones. They easily become victims of sexual and gender based violence in the workplace, home and community. Apart from social hazards, these two groups of people continue to be significant victims of disasters like water logging, earthquakes, fires, pollution, and building collapse due to their exclusion from disaster risk reduction decision making and education.

Bangladesh is no exception in this regard. It is one of the most populated countries in the world with 162,914,455 people living in the space of only 147,570 square kilometres. The country has a population density of approximately 1,319 per square kilometre. According to the The World Bank, in 2011, a total of 53,316,419 people lived in urban areas, which was 34% of the total population. Due to a high concentration in poverty, a large portion of these people live in squatter settlements or slums. Titled "Human Development in South Asia 2014 – Urbanisation: Challenges and Opportunities," the report says, Bangladesh has the highest number of slum dwellers – 60% of the urban population.

Despite living in such vulnerable conditions, the urban dwellers rarely receive guidance and education on enabling themselves for a safer environment, which places them in a dilemma and they wonder if they should stay, and how to protect their livelihood assets and even their own life. It should be emphasised that, in Dhaka, more than 8,200 people on average are concentrated into one square kilometre (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2011), and the city's population continues to grow with 1,400 new people a day (Grefe 2013). Increase of urban density is found in almost all other districts of Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet, Barisal and Rangpur.



PROYASH

AN URBAN RISK REDUCTION PROJECT

Striving for cleaner, greener and safer cities

FUNDING

Funded by the C&A Foundation
€900,000

Technical Support from Save the Children Switzerland

PROJECT PURPOSE

To contribute in strengthening national systems and mechanisms to protect urban/peri urban women and children from shocks and stresses, Save the Children in Bangladesh has initiated the Proyash project in the disaster vulnerable urban areas of Dhaka (Mirpur, ward 3 and Savar Purashoba, ward 6) and Narayanganj (ward 15).

PROJECT LOCATIONS

All within the Dhaka Division:

Savar Purashoba (within Dhaka District)

Narayanganj, ward 15 (Narayanganj District)

Mirpur, ward 3 (within Dhaka District)

TARGETED POPULATION

Direct 7,000

Indirect 60,000

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Women, children and the community of these urban/peri-urban areas have increased knowledge, skill and capacity to predict, prepare and respond to shocks and stresses by 2017.
- Government, private sector and CSOs have increased capacity to address the risks of women and children in urban/peri-urban areas by 2017.

INTENDED OUTPUTS

- Increased engagement of local public authorities, law enforcing agencies, private sector in urban risk reduction mechanism by 2017.
- National policymakers (relevant ministries/private sector/academics/research institutions/CSOs/Department of Women and Children Affairs, multi sectorial programs etc.) are sensitised on urban risk reduction by 2017.
- Strengthened capacity of the urban disaster management committee for an inclusive urban risk assessment by 2017.

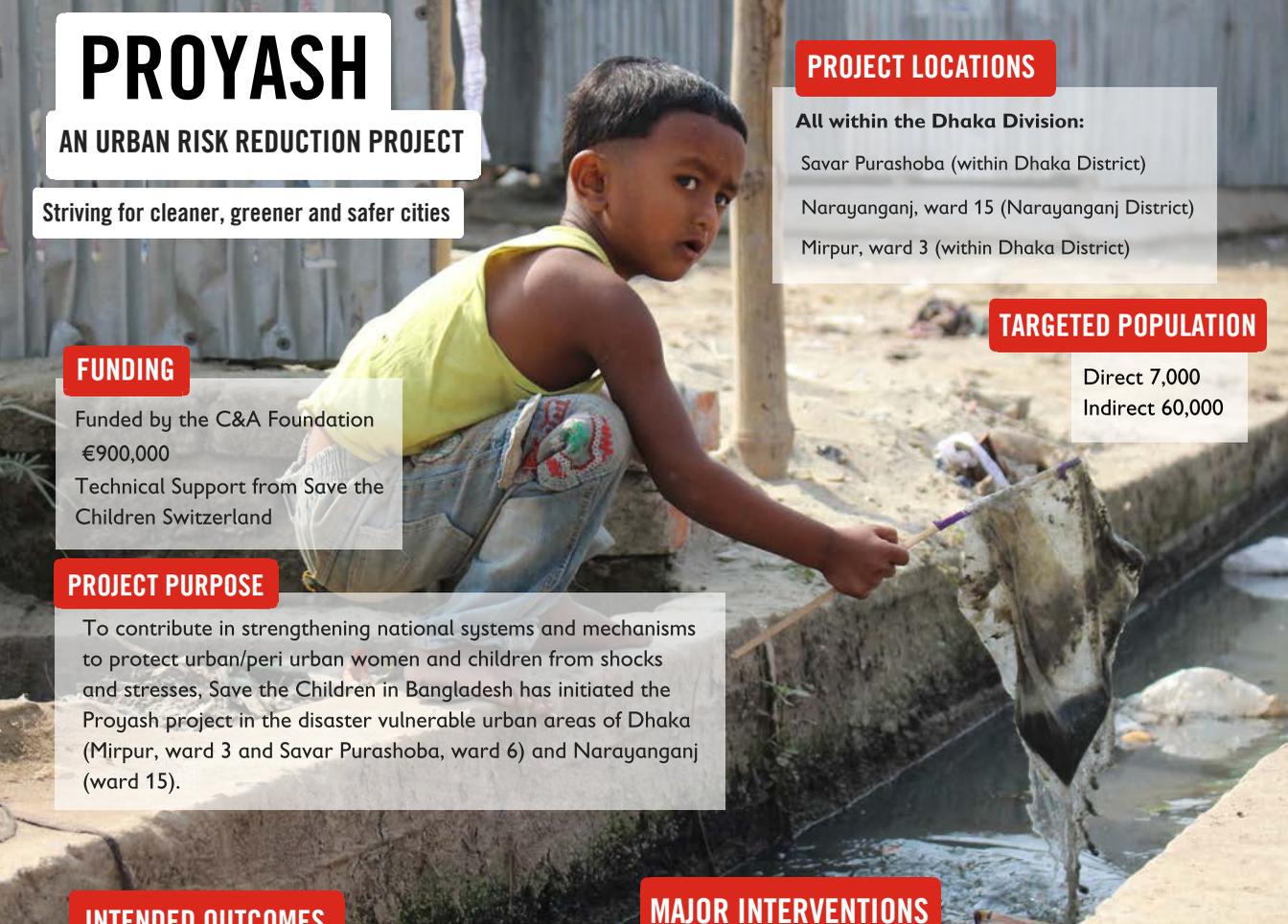
MAJOR INTERVENTIONS

Education Safe from Disaster (ESD)

- School Safety Plan
- Building the capacity of teachers, students and school management committees for DRR
- Advocating to ministries of education for ESD
- Arranging simulation experiences in schools

Strengthen Urban Risk Management

- Initiate and help foster the city corporate ward level disaster management committees
- Facilitate the process of urban risk assessments
- Facilitate the capacity building of community volunteers with the support of the fire service and civil defence department
- Increase the capacity of children and women in risk assessments
- Form women's and children's groups, and arrange capacity building sessions
- Facilitate the process of completing family level contingency plans
- Integrate sexual and gender based violence into family and community level planning
- Dialogue and liaison with relevant government departments/ministries to allocate resources for risk reduction



WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PROYASH



1787 Beneficiaries, 71% of them woman and girls, involved as of June 2016

Group Name	Male	Female	Total
Children's Group	75	81	156
Student Council	194	261	455
Women's Group	0	755	755
Community Volunteers	131	81	212
School Management Committee	113	96	209

Disasters have different levels of impact on men, women and children. In Bangladesh, due to existing socio-economic conditions, cultural beliefs and traditional practices, **women** are more vulnerable to disasters. Women have an important role in disaster risk reduction, but they are rarely included in disaster planning. The post-2015 agenda on disaster risk reduction (DRR), Sendai Framework concluded that without the full participation and contribution of women, building community resilience to disasters becomes difficult to achieve.

The Proyash project has been working to increase the knowledge and capacity of women and girls on urban risks and create opportunities to involve them in community risk reduction plans. Thus, the project focuses on the engagement of women and girls in the urban risk reduction process and helping them understand their role in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, in partnership with different stakeholders.

The intended outcome is to make women and girls more capable to identify risks and hazards in family, community, school and workplace environments, and practice risk reduction measures. Women and girls will also be encouraged to provide their opinions and ideas in community level preparedness plans and advocate for relevant stakeholders to consider the vulnerabilities women and girls are faced with when they are planning for risk reduction.

Project Activities

- Conducting regular sessions with girls and women on the various issues of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and gender based violence.
- Organising mock drills and Theatre for Development (TFD) highlighting children's and women's vulnerabilities in disasters so as to increase awareness in the community.
- Organising search and rescue, firefighting and first aid training for female community volunteers, given by Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence with the purpose to build capacity and so they would be able to act as a first responder in case of a disaster in their community.
 - Providing life skill training to the most vulnerable women to have an alternative income, and ensure a link with the government so that they can provide for their family in case of any disaster.
- Involving women and girls in Urban Risk Assessments, School Safety Plans and Family Level Contingency Plans so that they may address their needs and demands.
- Connecting women and girls with local government and relevant stakeholders to lessen the effect of disaster, climate change and the occurrence of gender based violence.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN DIFFERENT PEER GROUPS:

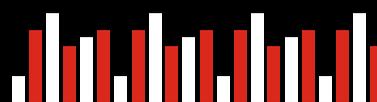
52% GIRLS IN CHILDREN'S GROUP

57% GIRLS IN STUDENT COUNCIL

100% WOMAN IN RANGDHANU GROUP

38% WOMEN IN COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

46% WOMEN IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



INTEGRATING SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV) INTO DRR



Violence against children is increasing in our society at an alarming rate. Children and women of all ages are exposed to various forms of sexual abuse, harassment and violence in and out of the home environment, in institutions, workplaces, and while going about their daily life. Statistics show the widespread prevalence of violence against children in Bangladesh. Such violence significantly hampers a child's development and their protection, becoming a serious threat for their wellbeing.

Proyash is an urban risk reduction project working to keep children safe from natural and manmade disasters, and social risks. The project aspires to have zero deaths and injuries of children, and zero days of school missed after a disaster. It has also been addressing sexual and gender-based violence, whereby the target is to reduce child marriage, physical punishment in school, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse and harassment via mobile phones and social media.

The Proyash project proposes that...

No child will drop out of school due to child marriage, physical punishment or sexual harassment, and every child will be safe from violence in school and within the community.

Save the Children asserts that “**violence against children is no longer tolerated**” as one of its focal missions to ensure child protection by 2030, and Proyash will contribute towards achieving this goal for best interest of children.

Through our different interventions, we hope to...

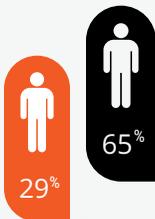
- Sensitize (increasing knowledge, awareness and capacity) caregivers, community people, children, youth and stakeholders to prevent, reduce and stop violence against children
- Strengthen community mechanisms to prevent and reduce social risks for children
- Introduce government initiatives for children, caregivers, community people and stakeholders to keep them safe
- Involve and advocate with the government and CSOs to stop violence against children and women
- Involve and encourage children and youth to keep themselves safe from violence

Our target is to....

Prevent, reduce and subsequently end sexual and gender-based violence against children, and introduce SGBV risk reduction measures to children so that they may take the necessary steps to protect themselves. We are working to achieve a reduction in SGBV using the Proyash baseline survey report as a measure in project areas, and to create evidentiary data for other areas.



STATISTICS



Girls married before the age of 18
Girls married before the age of 15

Women that experience sexual abuse in their lifetimes...



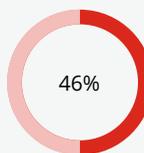
...Of them who are girls aged 10-18



Schoolchildren subjected to cyber-bullying or have been somewhat exposed to it



Girls aged 10-18 that are victims of sexual harassment



Children that drop out from school due to child marriage and poverty



Children threatened and verbally abused by their parents

Schoolchildren that are physically punished on regular basis



Stories

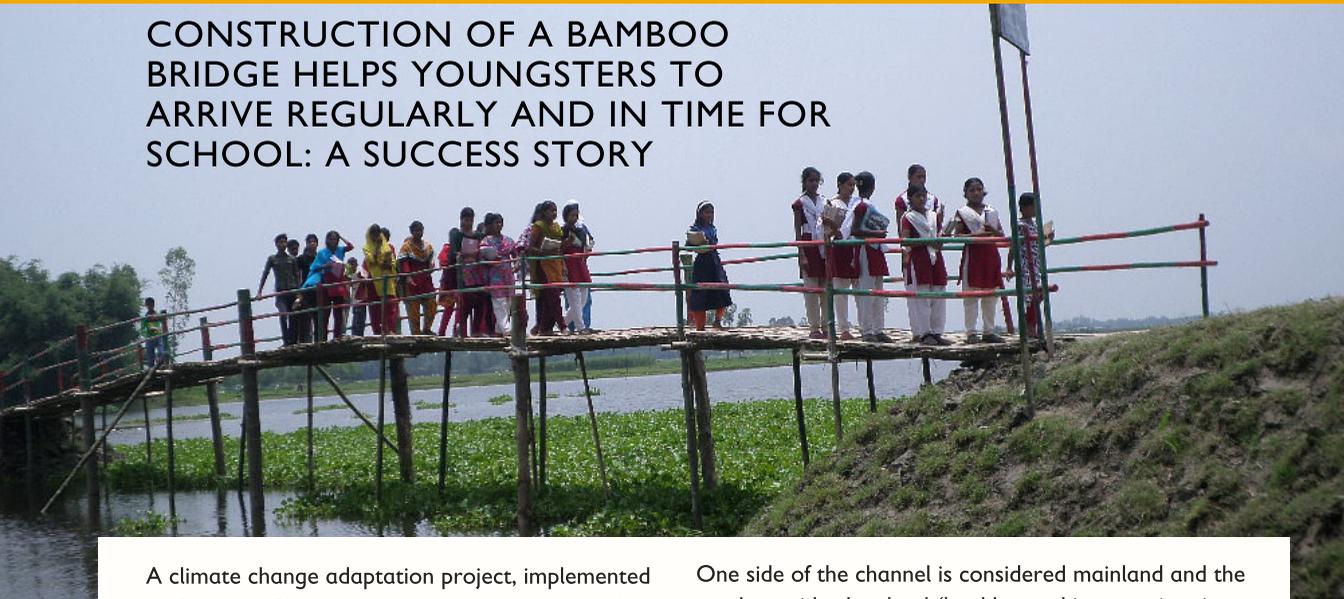
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Success



A CASE STUDY OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN RISK REDUCTION AND ENHANCING RESILIENCE: KURIGRAM, BANGLADESH

CONSTRUCTION OF A BAMBOO BRIDGE HELPS YOUNGSTERS TO ARRIVE REGULARLY AND IN TIME FOR SCHOOL: A SUCCESS STORY



A climate change adaptation project, implemented by Save the Children, has been in motion to reduce disaster risks in 3 Unions within the district of Kurigram – one of the poorest and remotest northern districts in Bangladesh – since 2012. From its start, all events that have taken place have been intended to occur according to project plans. However, an unexpected event occurred, which was unplanned and not initiated by the project or organisation itself, but by the children who reside there. Through the climate change adaptation project, children have been encouraged to share their perspective on climate change adaptation policies and plans through training in Climate Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (CVCA). As a result of this risk assessment and analysis education, the children have been able to participate and voice their needs and priorities, demonstrating a successful outcome from the project implementation in the district of Kurigram. A 100-foot wide water channel connecting two rivers – the Brahmaputra to the west and the Dudhkumar to the east – divides the Berubari Union, under the Nageswari Upazilla in Kurigram, Bangladesh. It flows through the middle of this Union.

One side of the channel is considered mainland and the northern side char land (land located in an active river basin that is subject to erosion and accretion). The channel contains varying levels of river water all year round, however, these two areas of land are entirely detached by a high rise in water level by the Dudhkumar River during the monsoon season, which also erodes the channel banks. Geographically, this area is significantly erosion and flood prone. Residents here are often displaced due to such environmental ramifications. Moreover, these people are considered to be ultra poor. Many of them make a living through labour and a few may also own land that they cultivate. However, because of the subsequent flash flooding and other natural disasters, their livelihood is constantly in jeopardy and faces uncertainty.

Around 5000 villagers with over 250 schoolchildren in the four villages of Char Rahmanerkuthi, Char Balorumpur, Char Tupamari and Char Narayanpur, are affected by this rise in water level and become vulnerable when crossing the channel during the wet season. In order to reach the other side of the river channel to get to the Berubari Union Parishad, Nageswari Upazilla (administrative ward) and the Kurigram district headquarters during the dry season, people would be able to simply walk across the channel.



However, rafts or vella made from cut banana tree stems/trunks are usually used as an affordable method of transport across the river during monsoon season. An estimated 150 children are irregular with their school attendance due to this unreliable method of crossing in order to get to their schools on the mainland side. Many children would have to carry a change of clothing since they would be soaked with water after the passage on the banana raft. There are no schooling institutions within the four villages on the charland side, so this journey across the channel is essential for these children to receive their rightful education.

Climate Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (CVCA) seeks to make children in a community skilled in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. It teaches them to assess vulnerabilities and judge the capacity of it according to their local area. In addition to risk mapping, they learn to develop their advocacy and negotiating skills. The hope is that this training will give them the initiative to tackle and solve climate related vulnerabilities alongside their community with long lasting results for future generations. As a part the Save the Children initiatives, Save the Children facilitated the formation of 'Dudhkumur Child and Youth Club' in Baliar Kuti Chara village in the Berubari Union.

The children who are a part of the Dudhkumur Union Child and Youth Club participated in this CVCA training, and after mapping local area risks, they assessed that the river crossing is the most significant hazard for schoolchildren in need of rectification. They thus highlighted this vulnerability analysis at their community meeting. It was then decided that the assessment findings be brought forward to the community leaders and chairman of their Union Parishad – who stands as the local government representative – during a validation workshop of CVCA planning.

The chairman then sought to present this issue to the government authority in order to initiate the appropriate action.

Plans to commission a bridge were consequently executed in a '40 day programme' with support from the local government. The determined children then brought the planning to the attention of the community, who then were able to provide the labour required to build this proposed structure. The Union Parishad could then begin taking action alongside the support of the local NGO Solidarity – an organisation that carries out its charitable work in the union area. Save the Children Bangladesh provided the funding for the initial construction, totalling 35,000 Taka. In collaboration with the children and facilitators of the Save the Children project, the Union Parishad finalised plans. A 60-foot long and 3.5-foot wide bridge was to be constructed out of bamboo materials, with the local people acting as free labour (otherwise costing 70,000 taka). Villagers and schoolchildren collected bamboo donated by the local people, and with the help of Solidarity, began construction over the 40-day allocated period. This was not an easily accomplished feat as it took approximately 2 years advocacy for action to be taken in building the bridge. Since the area in the charland is remote and people are very poor, it was initially hard for the issue to be given much importance by the Union Parishad. It was only after continuous advocating by the children over a considerably long time that this encouraging outcome had come about.

Before the implementation of the Save the Children project in 2012, the people of Kurigram had little hope in providing a solution to the channel crossing by creating a bridge. If it were not for the children's initiative and determination in reducing this local risk in association with the community, the likelihood of the bridge being built would have been near to none. This goes to show the effectiveness of CVCA education and training in younger people, as it has proven to produce successful results and in return have a lasting positive impact on the community as a whole. The children, in association with their Union Parishad, Solidarity and Save the Children, continued their advocacy and now a much more durable bridge has been constructed using the RCC (reinforced concrete and cement) method as a permanent, long lasting solution. In addition, funds provided by the government have allowed the connecting roads on either side to be raised in order to be level with the bridge.

SUCCESSFUL CHILD-FACILITATED ADVOCACY: SUMON'S STORY

Location: Mohammadpur, Dhaka

“ My name is Raqibul Islam Sumon. I'm 13 years old. I study in class eight at the Rainbow Model School. My father died when I was 5 years old. I have no brothers or sisters. Me and my mother are the only the two members of my family. My mother works as a maid servant. My home district is Rangpur. I currently live on Road 2, Mohammadia housing in Mohammadpur.

It is very difficult to bear my educational expenses with my mother's income. We live in a tiny tin shed room where there are no windows and it's always damp. My mother frequently becomes sick. In my area, most of the people are rickshaw pullers and drivers, maid servants, garment workers, small business owners etc. They all earn low incomes. I have been living in this area for the last 5 years.

From river to polluted canal

There is a canal beside my home. About 30 years ago this canal was a river. Boats and strollers use to run on the river. Local people used to fish and bathe there. In 1990 the river became dry day by day. That time local people started to build on the dry river. As a consequence the river became a canal and also a place where waste was dumped. It was full of waste and polythene bags. As a result, water circulation was hampered, and when it rained it would cause water logging. The area produced a foul smell and polluted our environment.

“ There is a canal beside my home. About 30 years ago this canal was a river...Local people used to fish and bathe there. ”



The previous situation of the canal - a place where wastage was dumped continuously

“ ...the river became a canal and also a place where waste was dumped. It was full of waste and polythene bags ”



The road beside the canal during heavy rainfall

Involvement in the eco-friendly child club

I got involved with eco-friendly child club in 2013 when the CPD-CCA staff came to our school for a school session. During this session I learnt a lot and I became more interested, which led me to be involved in the eco-friendly child club. After that, I received CVCA (climate vulnerability risk and capacity assessment) training, and during this training, we identified hazards and vulnerabilities of particular areas and raised the identified issues in front of the community people and local government authorities. In our child club, we performed a drama, portraying and addressing the identified problems, which is called a TFD (Talent For Development) show. After the TFD show we took recommendations from the audience. We also observed a special day and participated in different types of governmental and non-governmental programs.

During the CVCA process we were made aware of the hazards created by the canal. We validated the CVCA findings with the ward office and also described the whole situation, the suffering of the people in particular. The ward secretary treated this issue seriously and took the initiatives to clean the canal. Within two days we saw that the canal had started to be cleaned up. Then we went to the ward office with the club facilitator of the CPD-CCA in order to give thanks to the ward secretary for taking these initiatives. After that, we made sure to educate the local people to not to throw their wastage irresponsibly and how to keep the canal and their surroundings clean.

Since the cleaning of the canal, water logging has been reduced, children are going to school comfortably, the bee and mosquito problems have decreased and health hazards have also reduced. As the result, the residents' livelihoods have improved.



Locals students and their teacher assess the vulnerabilities and risks of the canal

“

During the CVCA process we were made aware of the hazards created by the canal. We validated the CVCA findings with the ward office”



Local youth present their findings to the government official

From this positive outcome, I got to understand that if we work together and raise the problems in right place and right way, success will surely come.

Before being involved with the CPD-CCA project, none of us would have understood how polluted the environment had become. We wouldn't have known what our responsibility is to protect our environment, or how children can be able to contribute to development work. We had no opportunity to raise our voice on that level. Beyond our studies, we did not know how to get involved in other social work; we have no place where we could express our feelings. However, after being involved with child club, we finally had a place where children could share their thoughts. We got to know the successes of our team work, and now we have the ability to raise our voices at the required level, which has helped us build our confidence day by day to raise further issues. From now on, we are expected to share our feelings in our community, and also the community people have been giving priority to our suggestions. In this way, we become very familiar locally as well as in the local government office. We are very happy and are feeling proud of our success. Our wish is to always work together to develop our community. Mr. Tariqul Islam, Head teacher of Rainbow model high school, mentions me as a very active and motivated boy. He says he can differentiate those students of the school who are attending child club and school sessions and other students those who are not involved with CPD-CCA activities. After being involved with the CPD-CCA project, students have increased their leaderships skills, and so our headmaster gave some school related responsibilities to me and he was proud that I had successfully completed my responsibilities with along with my friends. I believe that every child has the capacity to do as I did, and if that happens then we will be able to develop our nation and build better leaders of the future. ”



The clean up process of the canal

“

From this positive outcome, I came to understand that if we work together and raise the problems in right place and right way, success will surely come. ”



The result of the clean up and the state of the canal today

'GREEN CAMPUS INITIATIVES': A CHILD RESILIENCE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DHAKA NORTH CITY CORPORATION

Save the Children has been working to implement the Child Resilience Project (CRP) in association with the Social and Economic Enhancement Programme or SEEP (a partner NGO based in Mirpur, Dhaka), to strengthen community resilience in the districts of Dhaka, Khulna and Satkhira since 2013. The project has been practised through two approaches – Child Centred Disaster Risk Reduction (CCDRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). The intervention hopes to improve the knowledge and capacity of the local community and children in disaster risk reduction and help adapt them to the hazards caused by climate change. The Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) sought to replicate the project after witnessing the benefit of these project activities in their ward. Thus a pilot programme called the 'Green Campus Initiative through Climate and Disaster Resilient Activities in School' was initiated by the DNCC, and in association with the Save the Children's CRP, and in agreement with the SEEP, the programme was implemented at Mirpur Girls Ideal Laboratory Institute in Mirpur, Dhaka. Over 300 students, 200 parents and 200 or more community members have directly benefited from this project.

Project Period and Budget

September 2014 – August 2015
US \$5000

Project Partners

- CITYNET Bangladesh Chapter: Overall Co-ordination and Project Planning
- Green Belt Trust: Aided in the green initiative programme with plantation, recyclable collection points, rainwater harvesting, solar panel installation in the environmental club
- Social and Economic Enhancement Programme (SEEP) of Save the Children: Implemented the DRR activities in the school and the nearby community
- Mirpur Girls' Ideal Laboratory Institute: Participant in the project activities



Project Goals and Purpose The overall goal of the Green Campus Initiative intends to encourage students to conduct greener practises, make them more aware of the different aspects of environmental change and natural disasters, and to positively develop their attitude towards environmental conservation and protection. Furthermore, the collaboration with the Child Resilience Project hopes to educate the children in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. In the long term, the project envisions to create a greener generation and hopes that the children will use this education to contribute to their school and society in the future. The project believes that school is the ideal environment to incorporate these activities and have children learn at an early age the importance of greener practises. Moreover, the children should ultimately see their school campus as not only a place for learning, but also a place where they can model a greener way of living.

Throughout the project, **activities** have been tailored to achieve these goals, such as:

- A video screening about CCA and developing various educational isometric material (brochures, flip charts, leaflets etc) promoting and CCA
- Cooperation from the School Disaster Management Committee (SDMC), Student Brigade (SB) and an Environmental Club
- Observing special CCA related days for raising awareness in the school and community

Outcomes of the project

- Established an Environmental Club run by students and guided by teachers
- Awareness raising activities conducted in the school on green practises such as recycling collection points, plantation of indigenous variety of fruit plants and tress etc around the school campus, water and energy conservation, solar panel installations and rainwater harvesting
- Plantation of rain water harvesting plant for 1 Toilet and for watering in the garden
- Established recyclable waste collection centres in 3 corners of the school
- Students raised awareness of Disaster risk Reduction by developing school safety plans, mock drills and various student-orientated activities (quizzes, art and poster productions, isometric materials and debates etc).
- Students have become equipped with crucial knowledge and skills on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
- The project has encouraged participants to take future initiatives in regards to CCA/DRR and be able to mitigate these risks

It is an outstanding achievement for Save the Children to have the government cooperate and work alongside the implementation of the Child Resilience Project in this school. In fact, this collaboration has enhanced the effectiveness of the project and has also provided a platform for future opportunities to work in tandem with government bodies such as the Dhaka North City Corporation.



Awareness raising activities in the school on green practises such as recycling collection points, plantation of trees and shrubs etc. around the school campus, water and energy conservation, solar panel installation and rainwater harvesting.



BECOMING A SPOKESMAN FOR CHILDREN: ARIF'S STORY

Arif lives with his parents in Sadar upazila (sub-district) of Pirojpur. His father is a day labourer. His mother was injured during cyclone SIDR in 2007 and lost one of her legs. There are six members in his family. Although Arif is the youngest child, the family depends on his income, as his father does not regularly work. Arif works as a mechanic of sound systems and often rides a rickshaw to assist his family. He dropped out of school when he was in class four due to the family financial constraints. Later on he joined the UDDIPAN's child club and came to know much about child rights, child protection, life skills and so on. He has resumed his studies and now he reads in class six of a night school beside his workplace.

In earlier emergency situations, children had to depend on adults for taking shelter or evacuation. Arif still remembers his friends who were washed away during the cyclone SIDR in 2007. After SIDR, his house was damaged and the crop fields were washed away. He had to stay in the shelter for months. He was traumatized to see all the devastation caused by SIDR. He was enrolled in a child friendly space (CFS), set up by UDDIPAN and Save the Children. During his stay in the CFS, he came to know much about child rights and child participation.

Since joining the project activities, Arif came to know about hazards, vulnerabilities, disasters and its consequences. He also learned that children and adolescents can play an important role in emergency situations. Now they have become aware about early warnings, evacuations and who are the most vulnerable in the community. Arif and his friends in the child club collected information from the community by consulting with the adults and visiting every corner of their area to conduct hazard vulnerability capacity assessments (HVCA). Children prepared their wealth ranking and social map and shared it with the other members of the community.



Arif speaking out to the community on various children's issues

...he joined the UDDIPAN's child club and came to know much about child rights, child protection, life skills...

Earlier, community people would not have thought children could play a significant role in emergency preparedness activities. However, when the community people came to know about the positives of HVCA, they began to believe that these children could have an important impact. Now children are disseminating messages to their family, community and workplace. Children can also talk with the union parishad chairman (elected community representative in the local government body) about their needs and what could be done for community preparedness. The community people praised the children and accepted them as active agents of the community. Children became confident in voicing their demands on different issues affecting them.

“ Now I am confident and can share my findings of the hazard, vulnerability and capacity assessment with my community and they accept and appreciate it.”

Pirojpur was affected by cyclone SIDR in 2007 and Aila in 2009. As this district is adjacent to the Bay of Bengal, the people are always in a fear of cyclones and tidal surges. When people experienced the cyclone Aila, they further realised that they may face further devastation to natural disasters at any time. There are limited disaster preparedness activities in that area. The Union Parishad, which is responsible for local level development, has limited capacity to assist vulnerable people. Many NGOs took initiatives, but due to a short duration, the impacts did not last long.

The people of this area understand the great importance of disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities in order to protect themselves from the adverse effects of disaster. They believe the Union Disaster Management Committee should act proactively for risk reduction initiatives. The UP chairman also has a positive stance, but due to limited resources he could not carry out as much.

“ It is really amazing that children have more structured and systematic information on the hazards, vulnerabilities and capacity than adults, and they can alert people living at risk too”
- An elderly person of the Pirojpur community



Arif speaking at a community meeting

Save the Children has different child development programmes in Pirojpur with partner UDDIPAN. Since cyclone SIDR hit that area, Save the Children initiated emergency projects for the betterment of the children. A child led disaster risk reduction project also piloted in these areas in 2009. All the projects target mainly the child labourers and out of school children. Save the Children started ‘Protecting Child Rights through Child Participation in DRR in Bangladesh’ in January 2011. This project aims to make the child club resilient as well the community. One of the uniqueness of this project is that it is able to integrate DRR activities with other existing projects. Another significant part is to establish DRR as a Life Skill since the children - especially the out of school children - experience a number of hazards in their life, so if they are educated and aware, they would be able to take the necessary action during a crisis. Child participation is ensured by involving children in different activities, such as; situation assessments, message dissemination, validation workshops and so on.

PEER EDUCATOR FOR DRR: HAIDER'S STORY

Mohammad Haider Ali, son of Mr. Lal Mia and Mrs. Baby Akhter, is an enthusiastic and hardworking 17 year old boy. He has been living in a slum in Mirpur, Dhaka with his family. He has three brothers and a sister. His father works in a barbershop and is the sole breadwinner in his family, aside from his father. His father's income is not enough to support his family properly, and so Haider Ali and his elder brother's work in grocery shops and a motor garage help in providing income. However, his father is keen for his children to continue their education despite the economic hardship.

Haider lives in a very congested area where every house is conjoined together and there is lack of basic facilities like electricity, water and sanitation. Fire incidents are commonplace in this area as there is no legal electricity line, instead the inhabitants use illegal connections for electricity and use different electric appliances without knowing the risks associated with it. Haider's family also experienced a traumatic fire incident where their essential belongings were destroyed and forced them to take shelter in a nearby road for months.

Since being associated with one of the child's clubs of the NGO SEEP (Social Economic Enhancement Project), Haider came to know about the potential hazards and risks. He learned how to carry out risk assessments, how to plan and to inform others about potential risks. Haider also took part in the hazard vulnerability and capacity assessment (HVCA) of their area with other children in the child club. During the HVCA, he came to understand the hazard profile of his area and realised how vulnerable they are to hazards such as fires or earthquakes. He identified the faulty electric wires and the mal-practices of the community in using illegal electrical connections. Moreover, he concluded that the people living in the area unintentionally create hazards, which could otherwise be prevented.

He felt happy to share the findings of the HVCA to the community and the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) groups. The community members were made aware of the hazardous environment with the help of a pictorial presentation by the children, depicting the unsafe cables, unhygienic latrines and wastage in their surroundings. The children collected photographs of all these issues during the HVCA and also noted the risks shown with them, to help present their concerns. Community groups, which consist of influential people in the community, appreciated the children for sharing all this information, which helped educate the community. Haider also participated in the street drama on risk reduction to create mass awareness. He recalled the last time they performed a street drama on the risk of fire, and many praised the performance and afterwards asked questions for further clarification. Thus, it is evident that there is considerable interest in the community on risk reduction initiatives. Haider also received training from the fire services and the civil defense department (FSCD) on fire safety and first aid, and feels confident that he could act as a volunteer to protect his house as well as the community. He said:

“ Now I feel very happy to take part in DRR and I can see the positive reaction from the community on the child centered risk reduction intervention. Now the community discusses among themselves how they can work together to make the community protected from potential risks.”



AN AGENT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION: KHADIJA'S STORY

Pirojpur district is one of the coastal districts of Bangladesh, and one of the most vulnerable to climate change impact such as salinity, tidal surges and tropical cyclones. The community people are exposed to climatic hazards and experience difficulty in seasonal variations, which results in health hazards and poor cultivation since the tidal surges frequently inundate their land. The community people experience unexpected and odd timing of water level changes, and so they fail to predict the resulting damage. They are then forced to raise their plinth and even sometimes shift their houses, as well as lose their land and expected staple food production, which hampers their usual food intake.

People of this area have been living here for many years and coping with the tidal surge and cyclones, but in the recent scenario nothing has worked to mitigate the loss. As a result, people have problems in accessing food, nutrition, communication, health, water and sanitation. Children are not an exception in suffering from such circumstances. They end up having to postpone their education, lose their playgrounds and compelled to work to help support their families.

Khadija Khatun, a 15 year old girl, is from this district and witnesses the suffering in her community. She lives with her father Kalam Sheikh, mother Asia Begum, and has four sisters and one brother.



Khadija presenting in a sharing session

She is the youngest of the family but is enthusiastic and has voiced her concerns in various ways. Being a member of the child club of UDDIPAN, a local NGO, she came to learn about this climate-changing scenario. UDDIAPN has been implementing a “Child Centered Climate Change Adaptation” project, supported by Save the Children.

UDDIPAN has six child clubs in this area, where orientation and training sessions on climate change adaptation are provided to children and adolescents. Khadija is a member of one of these child clubs and has been participating in school awareness-raising sessions and climate vulnerability capacity assessment (CVCA) training. She took part in conducting the CVCA in her community and identified the climatic vulnerabilities, risks and potential adaptive measures.

In addition, Khadija has become a good mobilizer in her community and has been able to make her friends, neighbors and caregivers informed about the climate change impact and the importance of giving attention to the climate change impact.

Khadija and her friends understand the reasons for the changing trends in diseases and the struggle during the extreme hot summer. They also feel that due to lack of understanding about protecting the environment and nature, the impact of climate change has doubled. The children identified all the changing trends during the CVCA and created a seasonal calendar for diseases and hazards. The children found that not only are children in distress, but the community suffered greatly due to untimely rain or increase levels of water during the tidal surge among other reasons. The community people have been participating in courtyard sessions facilitated by Khadija. She facilitated the community to find out the probable impact of climate change in different sectors of the community. The community could then understand the causes of the irregular and unexpected levels of water from tidal surges and cyclones, and also identify the most vulnerable areas. The community provided information about children's health, education and nutrition. UDDIPAN facilitated the community to initiate adaptation measures. For example, Bondhu Chula, an environment friendly stove that emits less smoke, raising their homestead to protect from inundation, vegetable cultivation in alternative methods, rearing duck, alternative drinking water options, making health adaptation plans for their children.

The community observed these alternative options and some of them began using the Bondhu chula with their own interest and willingly attended various activities of the "Child Centered Climate Change Adaption" project like courtyard sessions, day observations, TFD, alongside practising the adaptive measures. The community now carefully considers the seasonal variations and learned how to make compost and using organic fertilizer instead of chemical fertilizers for their crops.



Child Club with demonstration plot



Bandhu Chula set up in a house

Khadija's hopes to sensitize the whole community and is taking part in Theatre for Development (TFD) - a popular way for mass awareness. She and her friends are taking part in observing World Environment Day, Disaster Risk Reduction Day, National Disaster Preparedness Day, where she has been playing vital role for disseminating messages on climate change and climate change adaptation to her friends, community and the public. She also takes part in sharing the findings of the CVCA to local government departments such as agriculture, fisheries, livelihood in discussion meetings. The local union (lowest tier of the government structure) disaster management committee (UDMC) showed their eagerness to incorporate some of the findings from the CVCA. Even the UDMC extended their support to repair one of the connecting roads to a school, which was identified in the CVCA. This gives access to good communication for Khadija and her friends to and from the community and their schools.

UDDIPAN encourages the community to set up demonstration plots to show how to cultivate alternatively so as to adapt with the salinity and tidal surges. Khadija is very happy to take part in the interventions and says "more children should be part of child centered climate change adaptation initiatives and we should take more steps to make the caregivers responsive to this, so that we could have better living conditions and can adapt to the climate change impact". Khadija has become an icon to other children and in the community, and there are increased demands from them to arrange more school sessions and courtyard sessions to disseminate messages on climate change.

The community appreciated other child friendly events such as competitions among the students to write essays on climate change, drawings and the TFD shows. Rebecca Khatun, one of the community members, who has received orientation and support from the project, says, "we are motivated by Khadija and trying to adapt environment friendly measures like Bondhu Chula. The burner is very good as it consumes less fuel than normal ones, generating less smoke and our children are getting a more smoke free environment. We received orientation on the child centered climate change adaptation and we would like to be a part of this, which is not only beneficial to children but also for the whole community."



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