



Bangladesh Annual Review 2014

www.bangladesh.savethechildren.net



Save the Children

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organization for children. We are 30 national organizations working together to deliver programs in more than 120 countries around the world

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Cover photo: Grade 4 students walking to SHIKHON School at Shitlachara, Bahubal Upazila, Habiganj District

Photo Credit: Save the Children/Jeff Holt

Concept: Save the Children

Our vision

A world in which every child attains the right of survival, protection, development and participation.

Our mission

To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting changes in their lives.

Our values

Accountability: We take personal responsibility for using our resources efficiently, achieving measurable results, and being accountable to supporters, partners and most of all, children.

Ambition: We demand of ourselves and our colleagues, set high goals and commitment to improving the quality of everything we do for children.

Collaboration: We respect and value each other, thrive on our diversity, and work with partners to leverage our global strength in making a difference for children.

Creativity: We are open to new ideas, embrace change, and take disciplined risks to develop sustainable solutions for and with children.

Integrity: We aspire to live to the highest standards of personal honesty and behavior; we never compromise our reputation and always act in the best interests of children.

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Photo: Save the Children/GMB Akash

Preface

There is a worrying complacency about the situation of children in Bangladesh. Unquestionably there has been considerable progress in areas such as reducing child and maternal mortality and increasing school enrolment rates. Fewer children are hungry, and better disaster preparedness (and a fortuitous reduction in the frequency of major disasters) has led to a reduction in the number of children dying during natural disasters. There have been several important legislative initiatives, including the passage of the Children Act.

However, the reality is that the overwhelming majority of Bangladeshi children have continued to be denied their basic rights. Malnutrition is extraordinarily high, with 36% of children stunted. Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of child marriage rate in the world, with the majority of girls married before their 16th birthday. These are both factors in the continuing high level of neonatal mortality. While the incidence of child labor in the formal sector has been reduced, hundreds and thousands of children toil long hours, often in shocking conditions, in the large and largely unregulated informal sector. Violence against children is widespread and routine, in the home, school, workplace and public arenas. Children living on the street and in the thousands of urban slums lack basic services and face high levels of insecurity. There is no national child protection system, and proposals have been mooted which would reduce the minimum age of marriage, and

thus conceal the extent of this most grave abuse of the rights of children.

Save the Children has an extensive portfolio of programs in education, health and HIV, child protection and child rights governance, livelihoods and food security and humanitarian preparedness and response. We have initiated a number of innovative programs in 2014, but I would particularly like to highlight the new Suchana livelihoods and nutrition program. This GBP 48 million, 6 years and 9 months project will seek to implement and demonstrate the impact of an integrated package of interventions to address the issue of childhood malnutrition in Sylhet and Maulvibazar districts.



Key issues for Save the Children over the coming three years will include child malnutrition, empowerment of women and girls, programming in the urban context...

For Save the Children in Bangladesh, 2014 was marked by an increased confidence in our capacity to deliver results for children, and a strong focus on quality of programming. We have acknowledged that being a strong and effective implementer of development programs is not enough; indeed, this provides not only the opportunity but also creates an obligation for us to work with Government and civil society partners to bring about substantive changes for children in this country. We are confident that we have the skills, the experience and the partners to make such changes happen.

Save the Children is also challenging itself to improve the quality of its programming. Stronger focus is on partnership, more effective monitoring, evaluation and learning systems, and improved understanding of gender issues and incorporation of this understanding in program designs are all part of this commitment to the highest possible quality programs for children.

Save the Children is in a very strong position as we move into 2015. We have a new three year strategy, in line with the new global strategy but tailored to the Bangladesh context. We are supported by a diverse group of 12 Save the Children member organizations, including four in the Asia/ Pacific region. We have 800 capable and committed staff, 75 strong partners and excellent working relationships with the Government of Bangladesh, implementing a comprehensive portfolio of 75 programs and projects for children, with an annual budget of \$50 million projected to rise to \$68 and \$78 million in the next two years.

Key issues for Save the Children over the coming three years will include child malnutrition, empowerment of women and girls, programming in the urban context (including in slums in Dhaka and other major cities), and planning for and responding to the challenges posed by climate change, including impacts on livelihoods of households in the coastal belt and expected large-scale migration to major urban centers. Save the Children will also seek to broaden its skills in public policy to include a focus on public finance issues, and to address the critical issues of governance, access to information and public involvement which are crucial if children's rights are to be enjoyed in practice, rather than just on paper.

Michael McGrath
Country Director
Bangladesh

Where we work

In Bangladesh, Save the Children has field or project offices in Barisal, Bhola, Jhalakhati, Meherpur, Khulna, Sylhet, Habiganj, Noakhali, Cox's Bazar and Rangamati



Joni Modok and his class friends are enjoying a recess at a SHIKHON school in Shitlachara Village, Bahubal Upazila, Habiganj District, Rashidpur Tea Garden

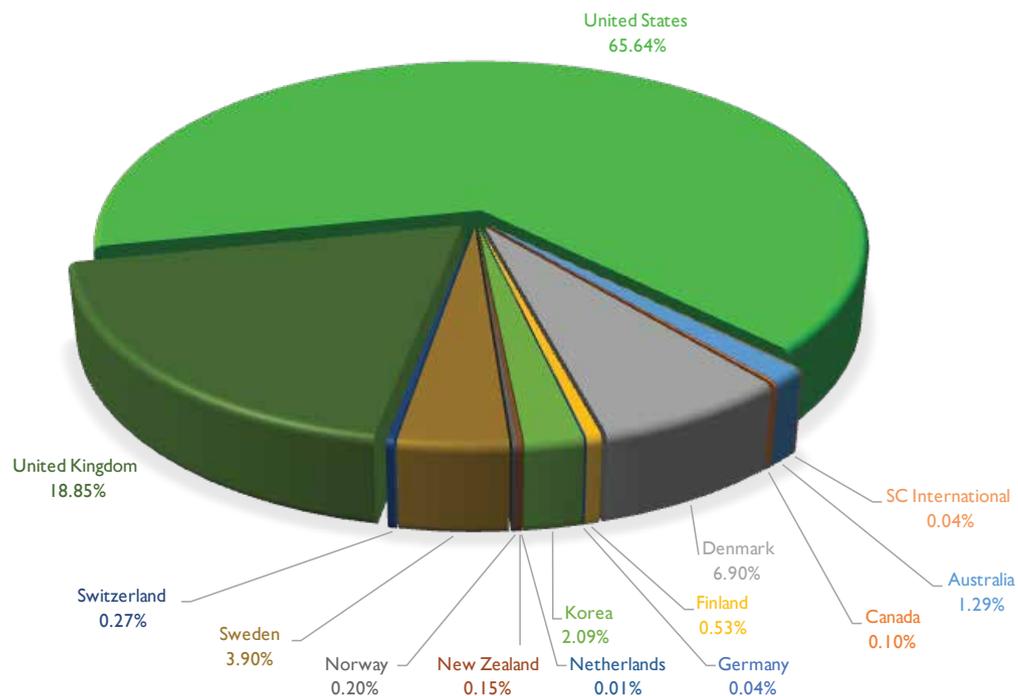
Photo: Save the Children/Jeff Holt



Finance

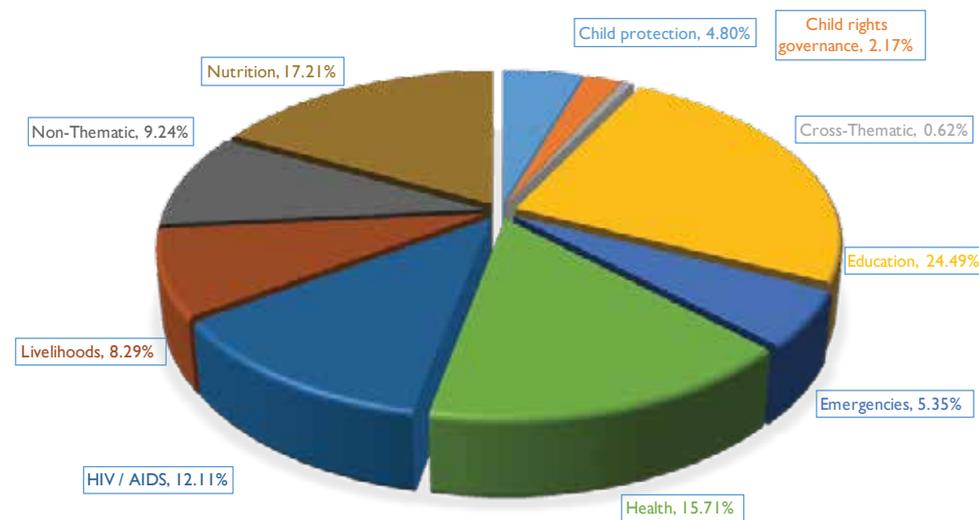
In 2014, our total award income was amounted to **\$58.60** million and theme wise expenses were **7.60 %** higher on the average than that of the previous year

INCOME BY MEMBER COUNTRIES IN 2014



Theme-wise Expenses in 2014

Sector	US\$m 2014	US\$m 2013
Education	14.51	12.60
Health	9.31	6.90
Nutrition	10.20	9.84
Child Right Governance	1.29	1.17
Child Protection	2.85	2.76
Humanitarian/Emergencies	3.17	4.04
HIV/AIDS	7.18	6.90
Food Security and Livelihoods	4.92	5.70
Non-thematic	5.47	4.70
Cross-thematic	0.37	0.55
Total Activities	59.26	55.16



Health and Nutrition

In 2014 we approached child survival with a system focused multipronged integrated strategy. While the target was to maximize our reach to poor, marginalized and underserved children, we maintained our priority to address inequity and to ensure sustainability. Our programs aligned with the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's (MOH & FW) sector programs strategic priorities and worked in close partnership with other ministries and stakeholders like DGHS (Directorate General of Health Services), DGFP (Directorate General of Family Planning), NNS (National Nutrition Services) and Revitalization of Community Health Care Initiative in Bangladesh (RCHCIB) Project, professional bodies, implementing partners and donors. We reached over 4.2 million direct beneficiaries in 18 low performing districts of Bangladesh.

In terms of reach our programs worked at the community level and put efforts to strengthen strategically located facilities to ensure the continuum of care. Throughout the year, 61,524 deliveries were conducted by skilled birth attendants (SBA) in the six MaMoni program districts – these were safe deliveries and newborns received all

elements of essential newborn care. The Community Case Management (CCM) Project provided quality pneumonia and diarrhea treatments to 111,616 and 112,660 children under five respectively. The SPRING project continued to support the MOH & FW to deliver nutrition services through 1,005 Community Clinics (CC), Union Health and Family Welfare Centers and Union Health Centers. In 2014, project-supported providers recorded 2,040,962 contacts with Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) or women with children under two. Through engagement with farmer groups, project-supported MOA (Ministry of Agriculture) service providers recorded 311,484 contacts with PLW or women with children under. Tackling Childhood Malnutrition (TCM) recorded 17,693 CHCP (Community Health Care Provider) contacts with PLWs for nutrition counselling and 18,043 for iron/folate supplementation. According to Nobo Jibon's annual monitoring report, 37% of mothers and caregivers were washing their hands with soap during 5 critical times, 95% pregnant mothers were consuming iron rich and 81% are consuming vitamin A rich food.



We reached over **4.2 million** direct beneficiaries in **18** low performing districts of Bangladesh. Throughout the year, **61,524** deliveries were conducted by skilled birth attendants trained by Save the Children



3 years old Chinmoy Das taking meal in presence of his mother Gita Das at his home at Ichakathi, Barisal. Agriculture and Nutrition Extension (ANEP) project under Health & Nutrition supports families to make healthy food choices through interactive nutritional education session

Photo: Save the Children/GMB Akash



A total of **10,719** health workers received training and provided services on management or delivery of priority maternal child health and nutrition interventions. A total of **28,717** community volunteers trained and supported to mobilize communities; **10,305** community action groups established for emergency transport/referral plans

13,142 adolescents received reproductive health and nutrition related education at secondary schools

CCM Project provided quality pneumonia and diarrhea treatments to **111,616** and **112,660** children under five respectively

One of our priority areas was to build the capacity of the health system – facilities and providers. A total of 10,719 health workers received training and providing services on management or delivery of priority maternal child health and nutrition areas. A total of 28,717 community volunteers trained and supported to mobilize communities; 10,305 community action groups established emergency transport/referral plans. MaMoni HSS (Health Systems Strengthening) deployed 190 temporary staff to manage gaps in public sector. Additionally, 8,954 MOH & FW workers, community volunteers, implementing partner staff and other community members were trained on various maternal, newborn and child health, family planning, nutrition topics. CCM project trained and supported 613 MOH & FW front line workers and selected village doctors to provide quality care for pneumonia and diarrhea. A comprehensive quality assurance framework and tools were developed; standards-based management and recognition rolled out in 30 MOH & FW health facilities in three districts.

We maintained our strategic focus on adolescents with a new project

called “Adolescent Health & Empowerment to Reduce Child Marriage” that completed preparatory activities in 2014. The Shishur Jonno program project activities included successful facilitation of Partner defined quality for youth (PDQ-Y) and adolescent/youth-friendly facility-based health services, reaching over four thousand adolescents. In the sponsorship area, over 68% of married adolescents used contraceptives to delay pregnancy; 13,142

adolescents received reproductive health and nutrition related education at secondary schools. At the policy level the Health & Nutrition team were proactive and leading processes for incorporation of new evidence based newborn interventions and revision of the maternal health strategy and standard operating procedures. We provided technical assistance to the MOH&FW to develop standards, protocols and training curriculum throughout 2014.



One year old Sadia gives a curious look at the Save the Children trained health worker who is visiting her house in Bakerganj to monitor her health under CCM project

HIV/AIDS

Throughout 2014, the HIV/AIDS program generated significant results through comprehensive intervention targeting the most at risk population (MARP). HIV prevalence among PWID in Dhaka has declined to 5.3% (source: The 9th Serological Surveillance, 2011) from 7% found in previous round. With the joint effort of other stakeholders the overall HIV prevalence has been kept within 1.1% among PWID and <1% among FSWs

Save the Children is in a leading role in the HIV/AIDS national response in Bangladesh, with funding from the Global Fund since 2004. The objective is to increase the scale of prevention services for key populations at higher risk and most effective activities with young people along with capacity building of partner organizations. This is to contribute to the national strategic plan for achieving one of the major millennium development goals 'combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases' together with the government of Bangladesh. We are currently working with 23 implementing partners in 54 districts to limit the spread of HIV infection among the most at risk populations (MARP) that includes people who inject drugs (PWID), female sex workers (FSW) and people living with HIV (PLHIV).

In addition, the HIV/AIDS program continuously operated many comprehensive campaigns to build public awareness, especially among young people. Due to the program's notable advocacy, information about HIV and AIDS has been included in the national textbooks and updated regularly. Thousands of religious leaders, school teachers and trainers have been mobilized to act for the prevention of HIV and for the protection of affected people.

Save the Children reached to the grant portfolio AI "Exceed Expectation" rating with the donor Global Fund (<http://portfolio.theglobalfund.org/en/Grant/Index/BAN-202-G12-H-00>) with 100% performance on key indicators.



Save the Children continued Essential Harm Reduction services through **68** Drop in Centres (DIC) for PWID through partners and learning sites and covered more than **13,000** PWID in **2014**



Advocacy meeting being held at Rajshahi on November 28, 2014 with government officials and community leaders to help create enabling environment for people living with HIV

We are currently working with **23** implementing partners in **54** districts to limit the spread of HIV infection

ARV support continued for **1206** PLHIV, including children and adults, through a comprehensive strategy in Bangladesh in addition to **8** newly established HTC centers



Save the Children continued Essential Harm Reduction services through 68 Drop in Centers (DIC) for PWID through partners and learning sites and covered more than 13534 PWID in 2014. Our 2 Oral Substitution Therapy (OST) centers were running well in Dhaka to provide OST to the PWIDs. 300 PWIDs had been under OST coverage as of December 2014. We provided over 7 million needle syringes with around 85% exchange rate. One million condoms distributed, 4353 cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STI) managed and voluntary HIV counselling and testing (VCT) done for 2637 PWID through HIV Testing Centers (HTC). In addition, we along with our implementing partners operated a total of 101 DICs and 10 outlets and learning sites for 29238 FSWs. A total of 8.3 million condoms were provided free of cost to FSWs while they purchased 16.3 million

condoms through social marketing initiatives. The project also provided 41508 STI services to FSWs and their partners and VCT of 3891 FSWs done directly through HTC.

Care and support program for PLHIV continued in Bangladesh by Save the Children and procurement of ART (Anti Retro viral Therapy) smoothly done by National STD/AIDS Program (NASP) with the technical support from Save the Children. ARV (Anti Retro Viral) support continued for 1206 PLHIV, including children and adults, through a comprehensive strategy in Bangladesh. In addition to 8 newly established HTC centers, Save the Children provided technical support to strengthen another 8 HTC centers for Key affected Population (KAP) in different priority geographical locations as a result of the increasing demand and promotion of HIV testing and counseling.



I was born just a few days before the liberation war of Bangladesh ended in December 1971. I am not very educated – I studied only up to class ten. I could not continue studying because of poverty. To bring prosperity to my family I decided to try to go abroad as a migrant worker. I went to one of the Middle Eastern countries in 2000. There I worked at a hospital as a cleaner and handled medical garbage including used needle-syringes and disposed them. In doing so my skin used to get torn at places but I did not care much because as I realize now, there was lack of safety instructions for cleaner staff. In 2003 doctors told me I had HIV, of which I knew nothing. I was sent back to Bangladesh.

At that time I didn't know how dangerous marriage was for HIV patients and my cousin brother, who's a doctor, told me it was safe to marry. I had no reason to distrust him though he never advised me to consult with any HIV support center that are run by NGOs. At one point I communicated with an organization named CAAP of which I read in newspaper. I had fear of getting exposed if I went to a government hospital.

CCAP arranged to test my blood for determining CD4 level. After the test I was given free anti-retroviral therapy that helps to prolong life for HIV patients. They also arranged to test my wife and son and the results were found negative. It was great relief for me, it helped me get back my hope. I discovered a lot of good people around me. Now I go to Dhaka every month to take my medicine and all the expenses are borne by CAAP which is a partner organization of Save the Children. Save the Children called the local influential people and government officials to help me out in my condition and fight off the negative social perception. They arranged a meeting at our sub-district headquarter where high ranking government officials and local political leaders were present. They listened to my stories and struggle and showed their compassion. They also conducted several meetings at my village and bazar to change people's perception and remove stigma and discrimination. Thanks to Save the Children, now I know all that I should know to live a better life and keep my family safe from HIV.

Humanitarian

We mounted major responses to all disasters in Bangladesh starting from the **1970** cyclone to the recent Flood in **2014** and maintained the capacity to respond to any disaster that puts children at risk



In **2014**, Save the Children's Humanitarian programs reached a total of **43,667** people directly, of which **69%** were children

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 for the last 45 years by working with government, communities and children to build capacity on disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA) and effective humanitarian response. We mounted major responses to all disasters in Bangladesh starting from the 1970 cyclone

to the recent Flood in 2014 and maintained the capacity to respond to any disaster that puts children at risk. By co-leading the education cluster, which is a coordination platform for education in emergency and school based disaster preparedness and lead agency of DeSHARI (Developing and Strengthening Humanitarian Assistance and Risk Reduction Initiatives) consortium for DiPECHO VII (Disaster Preparedness Project funded by ECHO), Save the Children played a vital role in advocating

disaster management policies and continuing education in emergencies for affected children.

In 2014, Save the Children updated its Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) and responded with humanitarian assistance to the cold wave in Khulna and Kurigram, and north western floods in Kurigram, Sirajgonj and Lalmonirhat. In these responses, Save the Children reached a total of 43,667 people directly, of which 69% were children.

Children of Berubari Child & Youth Club of Kurigram District, identified their risk through "Vulnerability Analysis" and Mobilized the Community, Union Parishad, Civil society to construct a bamboo bridge over "Dudkumar River" which connected two communities with mainland and ensured regular schooling of 200 children of detached Char land

We have continued to implement recovery and rehabilitation projects that started in 2013 for victims of Mahasen in Patuakhali and Rana Plaza tragedy in Dhaka, where our support reached 15,817 people (79% were children). In these projects, disaster risk reduction and accountability mechanisms were considered in design and implementation stages.

Save the Children has successfully advocated to integrate Education in Emergency (EiE) into PEDP-III (Primary Education Development Program) of the Department of Primary Education. With support from the Education Cluster and DiPECHO project, Country Model for DRR in Education and EiE was prepared addressing the feedback from Department of Disaster Management (DDM) and Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE). We will strategize this model after receiving DPE's feedback and get it endorsed by DPE, DSHE and DDM in 2015. Save the Children has initiated a process to contextualize the INEE (Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergency) global standards for EiE and the Bangladesh Standards for EiE will be finalized in 2015.

An online school safety MIS was developed and piloted in 2014 and the education cluster website was launched with technical and programmatic support from Save the Children. In the 2014 flood response, Save the Children supported around 3,000 children for continuation of education in 20 severely flood affected schools in two districts of the country.

Through the Child Resilience Project (CRP) and Integrated Child Centered Climate Change Adaptation (CCCCA) projects, we transferred knowledge on DRR and CCA to 16,261 children in Pirojpur, Satkhira, Khulna, Kurigram and Dhaka districts. Children learnt about DRR and CCA information through taking part in trainings, orientations, theatre for development, day observations and other events. The CRP project emphasised both family and community level risk reduction planning and in 2014, we involved 600 families in family level adaptation plan development and orientation in Satkhira and Khulna and Dhaka.

In Satkhira, Khulna and Dhaka, community risk assessments (CRA) were completed with coordination of DiPECHO partner NGOs and submitted to district authority for the annual development plan and climate vulnerability capacity assessments (CVCA) were completed in Kurigram, Pirojpur and Dhaka to highlight the climatic vulnerability and probable adaptation mechanisms. The CRP project supported schools in 10 small scale mitigation activities such as setting up bamboo bridges, elevation of school field,

repairing of school classes. CCA project tested potential adaptation mechanisms for agriculture, health sectors with the support of local government departments of agriculture, fisheries, health and water and sanitation. In Dhaka, project built formal relationship with Green Savers Bangladesh to explore adaptation mechanism for urban settings.

The CCA and CRP projects worked with local governments and made formal relationships with Department of Fire Services and Civil Defence. City Level Study on Climate Change was conducted with the support of International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) to explore climatic impacts on urban children. In addition we conducted another study on Child Participation in DRR and CCA in Urban Context. The study recommendations will be utilized for future project designing.



Tree plantation by students of a Dhaka school - a Green Campus initiative of Save the Children to develop resilience in coping with climate change and disaster risks at school level

Child Protection

In 2014, Child Protection sector, along with 24 partner NGOs directly reached 45,393 children (22,509 girls, 22,884 boys) and 47,003 adults (26,279 women, 20,724 men)

Through the Children Without Appropriate Care program, 64 girls who were trafficked from various districts of Bangladesh were rescued from Daulatdia brothel. The majority of them were reunited with their families, and others were referred to shelter homes while the cases were being resolved. 197 Children completed Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), among them 72 children received job placement support and 21 graduates became self-employed. 6 Child Friendly Spaces with opinion boxes were established for the Children of Sex Workers (ChSW) and Children Affected by AIDS (CABA). These gave them the opportunity to meet and make friends with children of their age and to express themselves. 17 Training sessions on child rights and child protection were conducted with 417 CABA and ChSWs. Members of 15 Community Based Child Protection Committees have attended 20 awareness rising and sensitization meetings, and now they are playing an important role in monitoring and responding to

violence against children. We have trained 2,000 Parents and caregivers on vulnerabilities of Children With Disabilities (CWD) at family and community level. In order to contribute to the protection of CWDs from all forms of violence, Save the Children has initiated an innovative program of building the resilience of 10,000 CWDs along with their parents, teachers and other service providers. The module on resilience has been tailored for CWDs in Bangladesh. If it proves successful, the idea is to replicate this in other project areas in and outside of Bangladesh.

Save the Children has been part of the core committee to draft the National Children Rules 2014 in line with the National Children Act 2013, which has been submitted to the government for approval. We oriented 300 Key government officials from all 64 Districts (Probation Officers and Deputy Directors from Department of Social Services, Police officials and Judges of Juvenile Courts) on the National Children Act 2013.

Save the Children and partners supported at least **1,100** child - survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in accessing legal, medical and psychosocial support through the Violence Against Children program



Laxmi Rani (9), a child with disability is playing with her doll at home. Save the Children trains parents and caregivers so that they can keep children like Laxmi Rani safe against discrimination and violence

Photo: Save the Children/Syed Antu

Save the Children and partners supported at least 1,100 child-survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in accessing legal, medical and psychosocial support through Violence Against Children program. The case management process assisted 80 child-survivors of cross-border trafficking in their repatriation process, and successfully reunited 50 of these children with their families. Non-violent class room management model and learning from the positive parenting pilot have been utilized in enhancing the protective environment for children living in 35 slums of Chittagong City Corporation.

Working Children program has enrolled 2,224 working children who have been enrolled in 19 Learning and Recreation Centers (LRC) located in the most densely populated urban areas in Dhaka, Chittagong and Kurigram. 527 Working children were placed in formal education system after graduating from LRCs. 220 Working children have been referred to technical and vocational training. At present, 1348 children are getting appropriate wages and other benefits like festival bonus, payment for overtime and weekly holidays. 24 Codes of Conduct have been adopted by local business associations and as a result, 619 factories introduced safety measures and 482 factories have provided pure drinking water, ensured sufficient light, ventilation and safe sanitation. Save the Children along with relevant civil society members continued advocacy, which resulted in development of a list of hazardous child labour by the government.



Children playing at a safe space in Daulatdia under Save the Children's Aparajito project.

Photo: Save the Children/Roland Karmokar



Kusum, the daughter of a landless farmer was married off early. The couple lived in a slum in the Dhaka city. Husband Mizan worked in a factory and Kusum worked as a housemaid till she got pregnant. During the pregnancy she was sent back to her parents. The financial struggle became harder in the family and that caused frequent quarrels between the spouses. After one such episode, humiliated Kusum instantly left home alone. Kusum came to the city again but within few days decided to return home – Dhaka was not friendly to a young pregnant woman trying to live alone. She spoke to her husband from the bus station. Meanwhile a woman convinced Kusum to travel with her. Kusum fell asleep during the ride and when she woke up, she found herself in an unknown place. Kusum was handed over to a woman who told her, “I have bought you for 40,000 taka... this is a brothel and those who get in here never get out”. She narrated her story to her first customer and begged him to rescue her. Next morning a group of people came and asked the woman to handover Kusum. These people took her to a “Safe Space”, and later on made arrangement for Kusum to be reunited with her family. The people who rescued Kusum were the Child Protection Committee members of ‘Aparajito’ project that works in Faridpur and also in Daulatdia of Rajbari District. The main objective of the project is to protect children from all forms of abuse and exploitation, rescue the trafficked girls and prevent them from entering into the sex trade.

Child Rights Governance

As a direct result of the social accountability, capacity building and awareness raising activities under CFLG project, in 2014 **USD 269,991** was allocated by **34** Union Parishads (the lowest tier of local government in rural areas) and **2** municipalities

Save the Children's Child Rights Governance (CRG) program works to support and advocate the institutions which govern societies to make the rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) realities for children, and facilitate an empowered and capacitated civil society (including children) that can monitor the child rights situation, participate in decision making, and hold duty-bearers accountable. Our vision is a world where accountable, responsive, inclusive and transparent governance assures the rights of every child, and where every child can have a voice in governance.

In 2014, Save the Children as part of the Child Rights Advocacy Coalition (6 INGOs, 3 child rights networks and NGOs) led the process of developing a framework so that data about child rights could be more efficiently collected and utilized. A key achievement was the coalition's submission of an "Alternative Report" under the UNCRC, drawing on the framework. Further, to commemorate the milestone of the UNCRC at 25, the Coalition held

nationwide celebrations through a series of high profile events, and a parliamentary debate on child rights. Equally, in 2014 Save the Children continued to support the National Children's Task Force (NCTF) in its advocacy for child rights through local level public hearings, mock child parliaments, research, journalism and strengthening its social media and digital campaigning. A key moment in this regard was the strong NCTF national campaign (through social media and the child parliament) against the proposed change to lower the age of marriage of girls to 16 years. We also strengthened financial inclusion of vulnerable children in Bangladesh through the spearheading by the Bangladesh Bank and Save the Children of a change in regulation to enable street and working children under 18 to open bank accounts in selected banks with the support of civil society. Bank accounts for these children can now be opened by depositing a mere BDT 10TK (0.12\$), with compounded interest and no administrative fees.



Bank accounts for these children can now be opened by depositing a mere BDT 10 TK (USD 0.12), with compounded interest and no administrative fees



Awareness building to reduce unsafe migration of children in Jessore, under Save the Children's LINK project

Photo: Save the Children/Deepak

In 2014 Save the Children also continued to implement its well-received Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) program. CFLG seeks to systematically address the relationship between local government and adolescents and youth, to enable more meaningful participation in the decisions that affect their lives, particularly through participatory fiscal management. As a direct result of the social accountability, capacity building and awareness raising activities under this project, in 2014 USD 269,991 was allocated by 34 Union Parishads (the lowest tier of local government in rural areas) and 2 municipalities (the

equivalent in urban areas) for children under child-focused development plans and budgets. CRG also took over implementing the Child Sensitive Social Protection in late 2014, which aims to address the child labor situation by improving access for poor households and their children to government social protection programs while, simultaneously, inducing parents to make social and economic investments in their children.



Photo: Save the Children/Deepak

Registered children are protected from unsafe migration

Save the Children made progress in this area also through direct policy advocacy with key ministries such as the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs to make long-standing social protection programs such as the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) scheme more 'adolescent girl friendly'. As a direct result of targeted policy research and advocacy by Save the Children, in late 2014, the Ministry issued a directive that 1% of beneficiaries of the VGD should be adolescent girls, with a clear stated objective of preventing them to becoming ultra poor women, and to support them to stay in school and remain unmarried. Lastly, Save the

Children made contributions—alongside other key stakeholders – to another long term investment in children objective. In 2014, after the launch of Save the Children's "Child Budget" report, the Finance Minister announced in his

budget speech that: "There are demands being raised from various quarters for a separate child budget." As part of this commitment, the Ministry of Finance allocated BDT 50 million for children's programs.



"I am only 16, which is not even the minimum age of marriage. When my family arranged my marriage, I tried hard but couldn't stop the engagement from happening. I cried all night. Then I consoled myself that I would try my best to continue my studies and try to help other girls avoid early marriage," says Jibon Nessa, who lives in Narshingdi township some 50 km away from the capital Dhaka. While Jibon Nessa was determined that her early engagement would not be an obstacle to continuing her studies, she faced a further unexpected challenge. "My school teacher forbade me to attend school just because my marriage had been decided," she explained, adding that, "if the teachers are not going to allow us in the school, then who will inspire us to continue our education? Teachers must support their students."

Jibon Nessa, who's a member of the National Children Task Force (NCTF), credits the organization and her membership for knowing more about her rights as a child in Bangladesh. "As an NCTF member, I have learnt what are my rights. Attending NCTF meetings and discussions of it, I have also learnt that the minimum age of marriage is 18 years for girls." While the old adage 'knowledge is power' certainly rings true here, Jibon Nessa adds, "I also know now how to better raise my voice when our rights are denied."

For her proactive actions, Jibon Nessa was elected as an NCTF representative in the last mock Child Parliament. The Child Parliament is a national platform for children in Bangladesh to raise their voices collectively, and advocate for influencing policies and practices that affect their lives. Jibon Nessa was a representative at the Child Parliament session in December 2014, which specifically concerned the topic "Child Marriage Hampers Education and Protection."

Finding it an overall positive experience, Jibon Nessa explained, "At the Child Parliament, I shared the experience of being a victim of child marriage and raised this issue to try and protect other girls. As a Child Parliamentarian, I got the opportunity to represent all girls, and I had the Deputy Speaker of the National Parliament listen to our issues." The practice of child marriage is most prevalent in rural and impoverished areas, and the voices of the girls who are primarily the victims of this practice can rarely reach the authorities with the power to stop child marriage. The Deputy Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament took action immediately by instructing the district administration to take steps so that Jibon Nessa can continue her studies in spite of her engagement. The NCTF District Executive members and District Volunteers discussed this instruction with the District Education Officer and Deputy Commissioner. The NCTF members also convinced the Headmistress of Jibon Nessa's school that she should be positively supported in her return to school and continuation of her studies. Jibon Nessa has started going to school again. She is now inspiring other girls to participate in different extracurricular activities. She is confident that she will continue to study and to help those who are vulnerable to early marriage.

Food Security & Livelihoods

In the 'Most Critical 1000 Days' Program, amongst the targeted 2,500 moderate and extreme poor households with pregnant and lactating women, 611 extreme poor households received asset support for income generation



14,486 households in Khulna and Bagerhat districts received assets for off farm and on farm income generating activities

In 2014, Save the Children's Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) program managed four projects using funds from UK Aid-SHIREE, one pilot project with funds from Unilever, and Nobo Jibon using USAID funds. FSL programs currently reach approximately 237,600 households country wide.

Within the SHIREE scale fund project assets for off farm and on farm income generating activities (such

as rickshaws, tea stalls, small grocery shops) along with skills training, and more than 9,000 households were linked to social safety nets. The nutrition component of scale fund was also rolled out, including distribution of iron folic acid among adolescents and pregnant and lactating women, micronutrient powder for the 7-23 months old children, de worming tablets/suspensions for all the household members, and motivational sessions on

12 nutritional issues in addition to special sessions with adolescent girls.

Under Innovation Fund Round 3 (Tanisha) project we distributed income generating assets to 378 adolescent girls, supported savings and encouraged wider community to support adolescent girls through the Community Advisory Council.



Julekha Begum in her vegetable demonstration plot at Najibpur Village Kalapara Upazila, Patuakhali. Save the Children's Nobo Jibon project assisted her to ensure livelihood for her family

We also assisted 1,200 households in Khulna City Corporation with assets, training and mentoring support. 11 Learning and Recreation Centers were operational and provided services to vulnerable street children through regular entertainment and tutoring.

The SHIREE portfolio also had a nutrition innovation initiative comprising of a research component that involved 200 households with under-2 children as who received intervention packages and 200 households that received none. All the intervention households were provided with ducks and vegetables seeds to produce both animal and vegetable protein.



Biplob Sikder-Lead Farmer of Borobogi, Barguna with his wife and son visiting their cauliflower garden. Seeds and know-how of growing better vegetables were provided by Save the Children

A total of **41,475** smallholder beneficiaries, along with community farmers, received refresher training on improved production technologies, while **47,096** beneficiaries received direct livelihood support from Nobo Jibon project

In the 'Most Critical 1000 Days' Program (MCDP), amongst the targeted 2,500 moderate and extreme poor households with pregnant and lactating women, 611 extreme poor households received asset support for income generation, of which 295 households received similar support for the second round. A total of 2,407 households received input for homestead production; 2,362 households got winter vegetable seeds, 1,317 households got fish fingerlings; 1,378 households got improved variety sweet potato, and 115 lead farmers received fingerlings and fish feed to set up demonstration sites. We also trained the targeted households to improve nutrition security. The operational learnings from the MCDP project have been incorporated into the design of new projects.

The Suchana program proposal was successfully finalised and submitted to DFID in December 2014 following several scoping studies on Sylhet's food security and nutrition status. These studies were further used to promote collaboration with FAO mainstreaming nutrition initiative, Nutrition Working Group and WFP's work on nutrition sensitive social protection. Findings also fed into the government's 7th Five Year Plan nutrition paper.

2014 was Nobo Jibon's last year of full phase implementation so a total of 41,475 smallholder beneficiaries, along with community farmers, received refresher training on improved production technologies, while 47,096 beneficiaries received direct livelihood support. Apart from livelihood interventions, 98,625 pregnant and lactating women and 6-23 months old children also received support. In this period, Nobo Jibon commenced disaster risk reduction related interventions that reached 174,394 beneficiaries.



Save the Children/B.M. Asadul Haque

Most Critical 1000 Days Project (MCDP) is a multi-partner integrated food security and nutrition intervention to reduce malnutrition in extreme and moderate poor households. Under this intervention, Saifuzzaman (38), a farmer from Bagerhat's Mollahat upazila, was selected to demonstrate useful technology to his peers. Before MCDP, this landowner's sole dependency on agriculture left him susceptible to the vagaries of the seasons. Through the program, he received aquaculture and horticulture training. He shares, "previously I would stock fish without considering their actual requirements. [I would] give a lot of feed, and still their sizes were disappointing. This year, I am following the training and expect to cultivate bigger fish." He also participated in the production and sales planning meetings, and post-harvest technology trainings where, he says, "I was taught how to maintain produce quality, and learnt of markets where I can get a fair price for my products." To bolster sustainability, the project linked the farmers to the private sector, enabling Saifuzzaman to receive seeds of the 'dream gold' variety. In a mere forty-five days, his field was yielding pumpkins. He notes, "I never cultivated pumpkins commercially; they were always for self-consumption. But now I am very impressed – cultivating this vegetable is very profitable!" Through MCDP, Save the Children and its partners have made holistic change in people's lives – from personal nutrition to household economy.

Education

Save the Children launched a new Integrated Child Development Program in an urban slum of Dhaka. This initiative will strengthen our approach to urban programming and allow us to assess the potential role of Individual Child Sponsorship in that context

In 2014, Save the Children worked in partnership with 23 national NGOs, corporate sectors, and the Government of Bangladesh to directly reach 1,011,539 people with Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), Basic Education (BE), and Skills Development programs in 43 districts and 3 city corporations of the country.

These programs were designed in the context of Save the Children's theory of change, with a strong focus on demonstrating innovative strategies to support children's development and education, and catalyzing systemic change in policies and public services. As chair of the national INGO Education Forum and member of the Education Local Consultative Group, Save the Children hopes to maximize the contribution of civil society to support quality education for all the children in Bangladesh.

Early Childhood Care and Development:

Save the Children's Early Childhood Care and Development programs strengthened the early development and school readiness of 104,584 children across all seven divisions of Bangladesh, through the PROTEEVA, Shishuder Jonno (SJ, sponsorship funded), Shishur Khamatayan, Multilingual Education, Education for Refugee Children (ERC), SUSTAIN (Support Urban Slum Children to Access Inclusive Non Formal Education)/EYE (Education for Youth Empowerment), UCEP (Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs) and PPEEMC (Pioneering Protection through Education for Extremely Marginalized Children) projects. 2014 was the first year of a World Bank-supported randomized trial of the integration of early stimulation into the National Nutrition Services and Community Clinics in 3 sub-districts. As a member of Bangladesh ECD Network, Save the Children contributed to the development of the draft National ECCD Implementation Plan, which will be put forward for approval by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs in 2015.



Save the Children's Basic Education programs reached **595,159** children and adolescents in **2014**

In **2014**, Save the Children reached **669,058** pre-primary and primary school-age children with School Health and Nutrition interventions, including deworming, vitamin A, iron, vision screening and health education

Child rights issues always remain at the forefront of Peer to Peer Group meetings conducted under Save the Children's EU-funded "Partnerships to combat child labor through Corporate Social Responsibility in Bangladesh" Project at Mohammadpur, Dhaka



Photo: Save the Children/Jeff Holt

PROTEEVA, a five-year USAID funded project, has strengthened pre-primary and early grades learning across 1260 Newly Nationalized Government Primary Schools and 2620 pre-primary centers. Impact evaluations show that PROTEEVA children are significantly ahead of their peers on school readiness measures related to emergent literacy, emergent math, socio-personal skills, and knowledge of health, nutrition and safety, and that these gains are sustained two years out.

With an eye to equity and reaching the most excluded, Save the Children expanded its ECCD programming to work with Rohingya children in the official refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, and we continued to reach Chakma, Marma, and Tripura and Rakhaing children with mother tongue based multilingual pre-primary education.

Basic Education:

Save the Children's Basic Education programs reached 595,159 children and adolescents in 2014, through READ, PROTEEVA, SHIKHON, SJ, EYE, MLE, ERC and PPEEMC. Collectively they made significant headway in reaching the last out of school children in Bangladesh and scaling up models for improving quality within the educational system at large.

On the system-strengthening side, the READ project started up in 660 newly nationalized schools with improving reading instruction, reading assessment and provision of supplementary reading material. Our flagship program for reaching

out-of-school children, SHIKHON, reached 145,849 children through Non Formal Primary Education (NFPE), Early Primary Education (EPE), and Out of School Time (OST) activities. A year-end assessment found that 99.6% of grade 2 and 96% of grade 3 children achieved grade level competencies, and average attendance rates were over 93%.

In 2014, Save the Children partnered with UNESCO on an Education Situation Analysis of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Our Mother Tongue Based Multi Lingual Education coverage in this region now operates a total of 35 multilingual NFPE centers for Chakma, Marma and Tripura children. We are also the primary education provider for Rohingya children in the Rohingya refugee camps on the border with Myanmar.

All programs, formal and non-formal, follow the national curriculum and all children (except the refugee children) take the grade 5 Primary School Completion exam. Save the Children is supporting the GoB in their long term plans to roll out multilingual education for ethnic children, and worked with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board to put in place a language bridging plan. A conference on "mother tongue based multilingual education: progress and roles of stakeholders" was held with the participation of GoB and civil society, and we gained approval to pilot mother-tongue based education in 10 Government Primary School (GPS).

The Save the Children student performance management system was adapted by the government as the web-based

e-primary school system, and is now being used by 63,000 schools. Save the Children launched a new "e-monitoring" partnership with Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and Grameen Phone, using android-based data collection and real-time analysis. In 2014, Save the Children reached 669,058 pre-primary and primary school-age children with School Health and Nutrition interventions, including deworming, vitamin A, iron, vision screening and Health Education.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE)

In 2014, EYE reached 180,407 children (89,898 girls; 90,510 boys) in 3 city corporations and 17 districts. A total of 97,551 children received support from the soft skills component including child and youth clubs, employability skills training, and child-led research and campaigning on the rights of working children. Save the Children made major strides in building its vocational training programming through EYE, and reached 28,959 youth with vocational training through 45 training centers operated by our partners. EYE National level advocacy focused on the Domestic Worker Welfare and Registration Policy and the formulation of National CSR Policy for Children in partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Employment and with participation of civil society, the private sector, a multi stakeholder CSR forum, INGOs and UN organizations.



Rashida, student of class 2 of Raipur Government Primary School at Meherpur enjoying playing with her friends



Students learning math joyfully in a multimedia class room at BM Model Government Primary School, Meherpur. The teacher is using a computer based supplementary tool developed by Save the Children's Shishuder Jonno program

PROTEEVA pre-school supports learning for children with special needs



Nurjahan Mitu, an eight-year-old girl, loves to talk and play with her friends like children of her age. She lives in Thataripara village of Badarganj Upazila in Rangpur, a northern district of Bangladesh. Three years back she could not even speak easily because of her speech disability. Mitu's parents noticed some difficulties in her speech when she was just one year old. A physician advised that care, exercises and opportunities to talk would help her develop speech. Mitu felt lonely at home as her mother was often busy with household chores. Neighboring children avoided talking to her because of her speech problem which made Mitu shy and withdrawn. She was deteriorating day by day.

In 2011, PROTEEVA, an early childhood development project implemented by Save the Children with support from USAID, started working to ensure pre-primary education for all children in the locality where Mitu lives. PROTEEVA staff convinced Mitu's parents and they enrolled Mitu in the PROTEEVA pre-school. The trained teacher involved Mitu in making friends and enjoying the fun of child-friendly activities at the PROTEEVA pre-school. The teacher assisted Mitu to find a study buddy in the class who also helped Mitu at home occasionally. The teacher herself provided some extra time for Mitu which created a difference in achieving academic and social skills. Moreover, after attending PROTEEVA's

parenting sessions Mitu's parents learnt to treat her equally with other children who had no special needs. Beauty, Mitu's mother, said "I did not think that my daughter would be able to speak, go to school and even read! I feel very proud of her when I see Mitu playing with her friends and people understanding her speech. I pray that she will hold high offices someday." Mitu has prepared herself to move forward in her education. School has opened her door to proceed to the next levels and she is in Grade-III now. Since 2011, thousands of children like Mitu have received opportunities every year with their friends through the PROTEEVA program which has ended in December 2014.

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Statistics are based on latest available figures from Save the Children programs or recognized international sources.

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