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CELEBRATING GROUP EMPOWERMENT

Bangladesh | July 2023



Dear friends,

I'm thrilled to bring you a brand-new report for the Group Empowerment Program in Bangladesh, showcasing all the exciting activities that took place between January and July of this year.

To all the new supporters of this program, we extend a warm welcome! We are truly grateful that you've chosen to support this initiative. We are eager to share the inspiring work happening in the schools. To all those who have been supporting this program since the beginning, we want to express our heartfelt appreciation. Your unwavering support and trust have been instrumental in getting this program to where it is today.



Festus Addei
Director of Programs and Projects

We hope you enjoy reading this report and feel inspired to share the excitement with your friends and family!

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Bangladesh**](#)

THE PILLARS OF THE GROUP EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

For those of you who have been supporting this program for some time now, you are likely familiar with the key activities that regularly take place in Bangladesh. If you are new to the program, let us provide you with some updates on the **activities that consistently take place** in each reporting period:



EDUCATION

Every day, 150 students have the privilege of attending school, equipped with educational essentials such as textbooks, notebooks, pens, and pencils. New uniforms are also provided to the children who require them, ensuring they have a comfortable and dignified learning experience.

NURTRITIOUS MEALS

150 students are given a daily meal at school, accompanied by clean water and healthy snacks. To monitor their growth and development, our partners conduct quarterly weight and height measurements, ensuring that each child receives the necessary nourishment for healthy growth and development.



HEALTH CARE

150 students receive healthcare services once every quarter or as needed. During this reporting period, doctors addressed various health concerns, including fevers, colds, skin diseases, parasitic infections, Covid-19, and general aches and pains.



LIFE & VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

This program fosters hands-on skills training for students in high school. During this reporting period, 30 students received sewing training, and 18 students received computer skills training. We believe that these practical skills play a vital role in fostering a well-rounded education, giving students the chance to explore their interests and talents while empowering them to shape their own futures.



PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Active parental involvement and community awareness are integral to the program. During this period, we were thrilled to hear that 80% of the parents of supported children actively participated in regular meetings. A key topic discussed was child marriage, covering its harmful impact, relevant laws, and providing contact information for reporting such instances within the community. Participants bravely shared personal experiences, shedding light on the negative effects of early marriage. We are greatly encouraged by the dedicated involvement of parents, showcasing their genuine commitment to learning and growing together.



Meet Antar, an eighth-grade student supported by the Group Empowerment Program. In 2022, Antar faced a heartbreaking loss with the passing of his father, which led him to stop attending school. During this challenging time, Antar's teachers went the extra mile by visiting his home to offer encouragement and persuade him to return to school. Beyond continuing his education, they emphasized that he could find solace and support from teachers and fellow students, many of whom have dealt with the pain of losing a parent too.



Inspired by their words of encouragement, Antar made the brave decision to rejoin his classmates. When he's not studying, Antar finds joy in playing football with his friends. He dreams of becoming a computer engineer one day, channeling his passion for technology into a meaningful career. With his resilience and the support he has received, there's no doubt that Antar is on track to make those dreams a reality.

WHAT'S NEW?

FUN-FILLED LEARNING

Our partners are always coming up with fun and creative ways to make learning enjoyable for kids! Recently, they organized an Anagrams competition to get the children excited about English and using the language. The children were given a bunch of letters on small pieces of paper and had to come up with as many words as they could using those letters, along with their definitions. The students had a lot of fun, and 40 children from different classes were awarded new pencil cases as a prize for doing so well in the competition!



Another exciting learning activity that took place this period was public speaking. Students in grades 6 to 9 had the opportunity to participate by selecting a topic from a box and sharing their impromptu thoughts on the spot. Some of the topics included the pros and cons of the internet, the impact of climate change on Bangladesh, and the influential figure of Kazi Nazrul Islam, who was a poet, musician, and revolutionary from India. This activity not only improved their public speaking skills but also sparked lively conversations about important subjects.





GAME ON!

Every year, the schools host a Sports Day, similar to Canada's Field Day tradition. Children of all ages eagerly took part in fun games; jumping rope, running, and leapfrog. What made it even more enjoyable was that they could dress up in fun costumes and dresses! Even parents joined in on the fun. It was a day filled with laughter, smiles, a chance to unwind; and have a great time after the stress of exams. Sports Day brings everyone together, creating wonderful memories and a sense of camaraderie through these games and activities.



DAYS OF CELEBRATION AND CONSIDERATION

On January 11th, in observance of **National Human Trafficking Awareness Day**, students dedicated the day to learning about human trafficking. Human trafficking is a serious issue in Bangladesh, with approximately 400 women and children falling victim to trafficking each month. Teachers took the opportunity to educate the students about the risks and dangers associated with trafficking, as well as how to identify and report potential cases. The students were given a lesson on self-defense techniques to empower them in case they ever find themselves in a dangerous situation. The day concluded with the students writing essays to reflect on what they had learned and how they could become advocates against human trafficking in their community.



On January 30th, students came together to celebrate the **School Day of Non-Violence and Peace**. Throughout the day, the schools organized meaningful discussions and interactive workshops, creating a safe space for students to openly share their stories and personal experiences. These stories highlighted the negative impact of a lack of peace, such as instances of bullying or mistreatment. By sharing these powerful narratives, students fostered empathy and understanding among their peers, promoting a collective commitment to building a more peaceful and compassionate environment.





On June 5th, students celebrated **World Environment Day**. They explored important topics like climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges our world faces. Through lively group discussions, students brainstormed practical ways to protect the environment, such as avoiding littering, reducing plastic use, planting trees, choosing eco-friendly transportation like walking or cycling, and speaking out against harmful practices like deforestation. By teaching about World Environment Day, the schools inspired students to become environmental champions, equipping them with knowledge and motivation to make a positive impact on our planet.



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

All the learning and excitement taking place through the Group Empowerment Program is so inspiring. It's a testament to the incredible dedication of teachers and staff who go above and beyond to provide these children and their families with hope, guidance, and the tools to succeed. Thank you to all of our donors who make this possible. Your support means the world to the children we serve.

Sincerely,

Festus Addei

PRAYER CORNER

We kindly request your prayers for greater involvement from fathers in this program. While most mothers have been actively engaged, prevailing gender norms in the community have hindered fathers' participation. Our partners are doing their best to address this through encouragement and regular meetings, and would greatly appreciate your prayers as they strive to foster stronger family connections and challenge traditional gender roles.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

EMPOWERING THESE CHILDREN IN THE CONTEXT OF A PEER
GROUP WILL PAY DIVIDENDS FOR MANY YEARS TO COME



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