

YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

Thanks to your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in Lalmonirhat. Learn more about the valuable ways your support has benefitted.

96% of sponsored children in Lalmonirhat now attend school regularly – a dramatic increase from 83% just two years ago. 100% of Plan's 1,429 sponsored children in Lalmonirhat age 12-15 are enrolled in our alternative education centres to close the learning gap incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

49 students who had dropped out of school due to child labour, child marriage and/or school closures came back to their educations. 16 schools received handwashing stations to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Your sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in Lalmonirhat.



2502

Primary school students received school supplies



21

Child marriages were stopped



1429

Children have resumed their education



COVID-19'S IMPACT IN BANGLADESH

Hear from Alonti about how COVID-19 has impacted her community.

"When COVID-19 came to Bangladesh, my family panicked. It affected us a lot. My parents could not afford private tuition. At that moment, Plan International extended its financial support to us. This made us smile during the hardship. I purchased textbooks and gave the tuition fees with that money."

CASE STORY: I WANT TO BE A TEACHER



NAME: SUMAIYA

AGE: 14 YEARS OLD

HOBBY: READING

"I know that there should not be any discrimination between a boy and a girl, and I learned about this by participating in different events conducted by Plan International Bangladesh in my community."

Meet Sumaiya

Like your sponsored child, Sumaiya has been empowered by Plan International to change her life. The daughter of two waste management operators, Sumaiya lives with her family in a slum in Dhaka City. Learning about girls' rights and the downsides of child marriage through Plan encouraged Sumaiya to speak her mind and follow her dreams.

Prevention of Child Marriage

Though marriage is technically illegal in Bangladesh for girls under 18, the policy is rarely enforced, and parents often marry off their young daughters illegally. One explanation for this practise is that, in Sumaiya's neighbourhood, girls are often seen as financial burdens.

When Sumaiya's mother informed her that she had been proposed to, it seemed that the scholar's destiny was set. But Sumaiya had learned about gender and empowerment through Plan, and she had other ambitions.

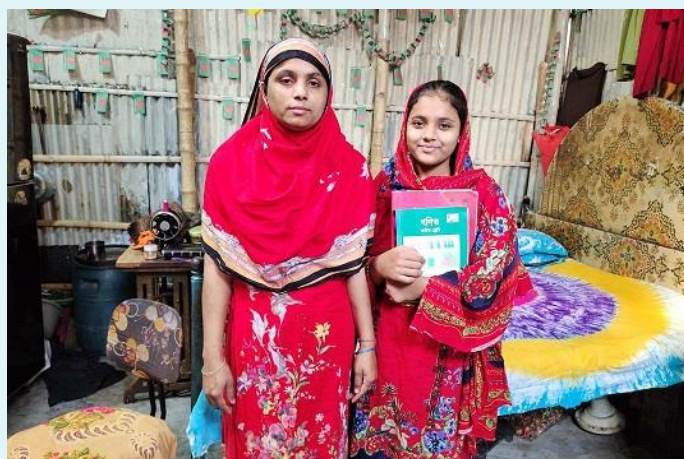
In a series of co-curricular activities hosted by Plan, Sumaiya became aware of the dangers of child marriage, which usually entails dropping out of school. For her, that was not an option.

"It Is Time For Me to Study"

With fierce determination, young Sumaiya successfully persuaded her parents that a marriage at her age would ruin her life. Instead, Sumaiya dreams of becoming a teacher. But in order to do that, she says, it is critical that she continue her studies.

"I am only 14," says Sumaiya. "Marriage is not the top of my priority list. Now, it is time for me to study hard and be a successful person in the future."

Sumaiya plans to bring this lesson to families around her community, who may not be aware of the dangers of child marriage.



Sumaiya studies with her mother.

WE CURRENTLY WORK WITH 3,493 CHILDREN IN LALMONIRHAT

OUR PROJECTS IN LALMONIRHAT ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



SAFER TOGETHER



70 vulnerable children were brought back from child marriage and child labour into safe learning spaces.

Community members of all ages learned about gender equity, safety and the protection of children. In Lalmonirhat, poor families may sometimes look to child labour and child marriage to offset their financial burdens. This year, Plan set out to educate families and empower young girls to imagine expansive futures.

2,159 sponsored children were trained in life skills, learning about topics like gender equality and gender-based violence. 21 child marriages were stopped, and 54 officials intervened in reported instances of abuse.

357 family members of sponsored children were offered safe spaces to reflect on child abuse and the consequences of child marriage. 60 girls and young women met every other week to discuss their rights, safety and future plans.

A PATH BACK TO SCHOOL



We're working to close the learning gap for students impacted by the pandemic. Lengthy school closures have raised the risk of children dropping out of school, marrying, and entering the workforce. We employed a wide range of preventative measures to encourage young learners.

286 alternative education centres were set up to instruct 1,429 sponsored children and their siblings. Here, they received tutoring to stay caught up to their grade level, and they also learned valuable life skills about safety from abuse and COVID-19.



271 households were equipped with handwashing devices. 49 students who had dropped out came back to school, and 408 local leaders were trained on protecting the local youth.

"I was not able to do my homework during the pandemic as my family's income stopped due to COVID-19. Now, I receive educational support in a way that supports my learning difficulties. I am grateful to Plan for extending this support during this pandemic."

- Riya 15 from Lalmonirhat

YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



36%

Of girls in Bangladesh leave school after grade 8



33%

Of teenage girls in Bangladesh have a child or is pregnant by age 19



59%

Of girls in Bangladesh are married before their 18th birthday



Your support helps children to stand up for their futures.

- Student dropout rate in Lalmonirhat remains high. We will offer cash support to poor families who may otherwise consider sending their children into child labour.
- Lalmonirhat's government has only given a fraction of its resources to adolescent health. We will give workshops to officials to increase knowledge about safety.
- The pandemic effected education for Lalmonirhat's students. We will continue to offer tutoring and extracurricular workshops for sponsored children.
- Child marriage is higher in rural areas like Lalmonirhat. We will offer cash support to poor families who may be looking to child marriage for financial reasons.

We know the best is yet to come, and together we will continue to work for a brighter future for the children in Lalmonirhat.



"Last year, with your support, all the students could reduce their learning gaps and increase confidence. Attendance of sponsored children in school increased from 83% to 96%. Thank you."

Ashik Billah
Programme Area Manager, Lalmonirhat

YOUR GENEROSITY WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN STANDING UP FOR THEIR FUTURE AND RIGHTS