

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

In the slums of Dhaka City, residents lost 82% of their income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, schools remained closed for young learners for more than a year and a half.

Our “Child Bride to Bookworm” project successfully kept 8,784 students in school using activities, sports, critical resources and days of celebration. 210 children received funding to pay tuition fees and eat nutritious meals, while 337 families received funding and vocational training to build solvent businesses.

**Your sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in Dhaka.**



# 622

Young women have access to safe, private bathing spaces



# 210

Children received funding for education and food



# 1776

Students participated in Gender Equality training



## 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.

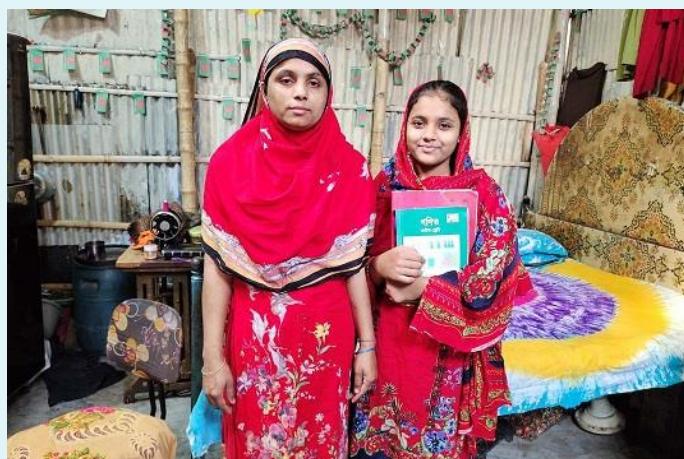
In a series of co-curricular activities hosted by Plan, Sumaiya became aware of the dangers of child marriage, which usually entails dropping out of school. For her, that was not an option.

## "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 3,135 CHILDREN IN DHAKA**

# OUR PROJECTS IN DHAKA ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Hundreds of young people in Dhaka received critical resources to pursue a life path with dignity, from private bathing spaces to hygiene kits.

## SKILLS TO SUCCEED



**622 adolescent girls now have a private place to bathe.** In Dhaka, girls and women often lack access to private bathing, which – particularly during menstruation – can give rise to dangerous situations. This year, Plan set out to address a theme of women's safety and agency in both practical and theoretical ways.

15 bathing areas were built to be used exclusively by women and girls. To defeat taboos and sexist misinformation, 309 teen girls learned about menstrual hygiene, child marriage and gender-based violence.

But we also approached autonomy financially. 315 sponsored households were trained in our "Starting and Improving Your Business" module, after which they will receive funding to grow their enterprises. 22 sponsored families participated in skills training, which will allow them to receive higher wages.

## KEEPING STUDENTS IN SCHOOL



**Only one-third of children living in Dhaka's slums complete school.** In Dhaka, that's a sizable number of young learners: 60% of Dhaka City's 12 million residents live in the slums. When girls leave school, they tend to marry and become child brides.

As part of our "Child Bride to Bookworm" project, we're working to defeat these statistics and keep Dhaka's children in 22 participating schools. In total, 8,784 students have been reached by this programme, and now attend school regularly.

Nine children with disabilities received referrals to specialised medical services, and two of these students received glasses. Aided by the support of their communities, the students are now regularly attending school.



"My parents were unable to pay for my school admission fees, tuition fees and the expenses for my uniform. My gratitude and thanks to SUROVI and Plan International for this help."

- Mim, 14 from Dhaka

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



13%

Of students in Dhaka  
plan to drop out of school



79%

Of children in Bangladesh  
experience domestic  
violence



10%

Of girls in Bangladesh  
give birth before age 15



**Your support helps children to stand up for their futures.**

- Students in Dhaka have been heavily impacted by long-lasting school closures. We will continue to work to close the learning gap created due to the pandemic.
- Dhaka is one of the world's 20 most vulnerable cities to earthquakes. We will pilot some new initiatives and strengthen our disaster risk response program.
- As the pandemic continues, we will resume our work of educating people about COVID-19 vaccines and prevention.
- People living in Dhaka's slums lost 82% of their income due to COVID-19. We will invest more resources into offering vocational training and skills-building.

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



"We have been implementing projects in Dhaka to ensure better lives for young people so that they can learn, lead, decide and thrive. I thank our sponsors for providing support that contributes to achieving positive changes in these communities."

**Ashik Billah**

Programme Area Manager, Dhaka

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