

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

Barguna's schools were closed for almost two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which threatened the education of thousands of vulnerable students in the region. We implemented 64 learning centres to educate 734 students who have either dropped out or never started school.

We also set out to close the learning gap incurred by lengthy school closures. 300 educators have been trained to tutor 1,854 children so that they can keep up with their grade level.

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



# 3708

Education and safety materials delivered to children



# 734

Children are being tutored in order to return, or begin, school



# 682

Young adults received funding to pursue their businesses



## 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.

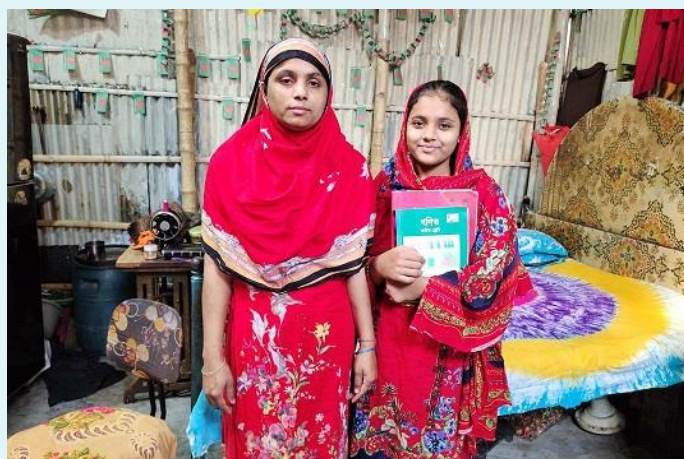
In a series of co-curricular activities hosted by Plan, Sumaiya became aware of the dangers of child marriage, which usually entails dropping out of school. For her, that was not an option.

## "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 7,126 CHILDREN IN BARGUNA**



# OUR PROJECTS IN BARGUNA ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



As lengthy school closures threatened the education of students, caregivers and educators learned how to protect Barguna's next generation.

## PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY



**We're engaging parents and grandparents to think more positively about Barguna's youth.** By offering social learning spaces to fathers and grandparents, Plan International is working to create safer, more nurturing home environments for children, and especially young girls.

The implementation of 65 Father's Cafés allowed for 1,250 dads to learn about critical childcare issues like nutrition and childcare. We also worked to break down rigid gender roles by discussing topics like maternal care and gender equality.

We also collaborated with the older generation, creating a Grandparents Group for 1,261 community elders. Through regular meetings and family visits, we considered how to fight gender inequality in Barguna.

An additional 47 educators received training on closing the learning gap for students in grade 3.

## A PATH BACK TO SCHOOL



**With schools closed for two years during the COVID-19 pandemic, 1,854 of Plan's sponsored children were at a high risk of dropping out.** Coming from poor or extremely poor families, these young scholars did not have access to technology that would allow them for distance learning.

This year, Plan International trained 300 educators to work with sponsored students between grades 4 and 7. All 1,854 students are now regularly attending their lessons at our 'School Under Tree' alternative learning centres.

We also provided these students with 3,708 packages containing school supplies and COVID-19 safety materials. More than 3,000 caregivers have been instructed on COVID-19 prevention and child protection.



"I study at Plan's School Under Tree project after school. I enjoy studying there. I practise writing, so my handwriting has become better. I could not solve maths before joining here. Now, I can solve maths on my own."

**- Jannati, 11 from Barguna**

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



**36%**

Of girls in Bangladesh drop out of school after grade eight



**33%**

Of teenage girls in Bangladesh are pregnant or mothers by age 19



**67%**

Of parents in Bangladesh believe in corporal punishment in schools



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

- Barguna is one of Bangladesh's most vulnerable regions to climate disaster. We will provide crisis preparedness training and critical resources for young people.
- Many of Plan's sponsored children in Barguna are now over age 10. We will expand our adolescent health and hygiene trainings in the region to meet their needs.
- The dropout rate of girls in Barguna is increasing. We will combat this by offering vocational training and support to family members of sponsored girls.
- Many students in Barguna fell behind during long school closures due to COVID-19. We will establish alternative learning centres to close the learning gap and keep children in school.

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



"After the COVID-19 pandemic, we are working to develop a comprehensive project plan for the sponsored children of Barguna, like school reopening and minimising a learning gap. Thank you for being with the children's development."

**Neelima Yasmeen**

Programme Area Manager, Barguna

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