

ANNUAL UPDATE

BANGLADESH

BHOLA



Together with your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in Bhola. Learn more about the valuable ways we work with children and communities.

Cyclone Sitrang caused widespread damage to livelihoods in October 2022. To help those impacted, more than 500 families received cash support so they could feed their children and repair their houses.

And community awareness events are dispelling taboos around menstruation. Thousands of girls, boys, and parents now understand this natural function, and girls can practice good hygiene practices to stay healthy and stay in school.



223

Youth trained as peer leaders on menstrual hygiene



1,534

Children attended early learning centres



5,391

Children received education materials

“I FELT ASHAMED OF MY PERIOD. THEN I ATTENDED A TRAINING ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND LEARNED IT IS NORMAL.”

Somapti, 14 years old





NAME: SHAHIDA

AGE: 8

**DREAMS TO BE: A
TEACHER**

“I LEARNED THAT EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT FOR STANDING UP ON MY OWN. I WOULD LIKE TO BE A TEACHER, AND I AM CONFIDENT I WILL BE ABLE TO FULFIL MY DREAM.”

Meet Shahida

Like the child you sponsor, Shahida is taking steps toward achieving her goals.

Shahida lives in a remote village with her grandparents. She loves to cuddle with the baby goats in her village, and dreams of becoming a teacher one day.

Learning With Others

Shahida's parents had to move to Dhaka to find work, taking her younger sister with them. While Shahida loves her grandparents, she misses the rest of her family. Her grandparents try their best, but Shahida is often left by herself while they are out working and she feels lonely.

But when Shahida joined Plan International's sponsorship programme, her world grew bigger. With her grandmother, Shahida took part in sessions on the importance of education. She started to attend the early childhood centre, learning and playing with young children in her community.

Bright Future

Shahida loves taking part in the fun activities at the early childhood centre. And she's taking this passion for learning into the rest of her life. With the support of Plan's community volunteer, Shahida has new educational materials and a drive to continue her studies.

And Shahida is now surrounded by new friends. She enjoys writing letters to her sponsor and being with other children. Her grandparents are also more supportive and encouraging after learning some positive parenting practices. Shahida is looking forward to her future and fulfilling her dreams.



Shahida is focused on her studies

OUR PROJECTS IN BHOLA ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Women in Bhola have been able to take care of their families and recover from the impacts of Cyclone Sitrang

RECOVER FROM DISASTERS



In October last year, Cyclone Sitrang made landfall in Bhola, causing widespread destruction and disruption in the lives of families. In the aftermath of disaster, children and women are at a higher risk of violence and abuse. And they are often excluded or overlooked in the provision of emergency assistance.

To help people meet their basic needs and recover after the cyclone, Plan International distributed unconditional cash support to 529 vulnerable families. Money was given directly to women so they could prioritize the health and well-being of their children.

The cash support was provided through mobile money transfers, and 450 women now have their own savings account. With this cash support and trainings, women gained financial literacy, challenged gender norms, took care of their families, and invested in their futures.



STOP THE STIGMA

In Bhola, cultural taboos around menstruation leaves girls without the knowledge they need to practice good hygiene. Serious health issues can occur when using unsanitary practices. And a lack of toilet facilities at schools means girls often stay at home during their periods.

234 young women completed training in menstrual health and hygiene, and are now peer leaders in their communities. Through community courtyard sessions, these peer leaders reached more than 10,000 people with information on good hygiene practices during menstruation. They also tackled myths and taboos, helping girls and boys better understand sexual and reproductive health and rights.

“My first menstruation started when I was 13; I did not know anything, and faced various superstitions. With the Stop the Stigma project, I now know about my period and I am happy.”

Babita (15) from Bhola



YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



The best is yet to come – and together we will continue to work for a brighter future for the children in Bhola.

Cultural taboos around menstruation persist in Bhola. We will continue to empower girls with the knowledge they need to hygienically manage their periods and challenge stigma in their communities.

Around 30% of young people aged 15 to 29 are not in education or employment. We will provide technical and entrepreneurship training for youth so they can start their own business and earn a living.

Around one in three people in Bhola cannot read or write. We will ensure children have access to alternative education support so girls and boys can build their skills and open the door to a better future.

Thank you for your continued support.



“Young people are deprived from proper information on sexual and reproductive health. Therefore, we have designed specific programmes to ensure they get proper services.”

Neelima Yasmeen
Programme Area Manager

THE PLAN EFFECT



Your sponsorship commitment becomes long-term change – providing help for self-help. We involve children at the centre of all projects, bringing effective and sustainable solutions to families and communities. With Plan’s Effect, your commitment helps empower communities to transform their lives and futures.

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



JANUARY



5,355

Children received annual health check-ups

APRIL



7

Advisory committees created on menstrual hygiene

MAY



170

Youth celebrated Menstrual Hygiene Day

DECEMBER



529

Families impacted by Cyclone Sitrang received cash support