

Nilphamari Bangladesh

Positive changes are happening in Nilphamari. Learn more about how we are supporting children and girls' rights through our collaborative, equality-driven work.

Nilphamari's close proximity to River Teesta is a huge blessing for the region as it creates fertile land for agriculture. However, the rapid climate crisis has made it prone to floods, making local communities vulnerable to daily challenges. By building climate resilience, we support the local communities, including children and the youth in safeguarding themselves and practising sustainable livelihoods.

In addition, communities are coming together to create a violence-free environment for children. Self-defence classes are instilling great confidence in young girls. Fathers are getting more involved in childcare activities, improving knowledge about early childhood development, and menstrual care. Moreover, schools and institutions are empowering the youth through system and policy changes.



Access to educational material reduces barriers.

"We sold our assets for my mother's uterine tumour treatment. She's cured now, but we can't afford school. With Plan's support I can continue my education." - Bithi (17)



Impact in Numbers

610

youth received self-learning support

3,073

fathers were supported in child care activities

690

teens empowered with reproductive health and rights

Girl Power



NAME:

Tahmina

AGE:

14 years old

DREAMS TO BE:

Police Officer

“Learning self-defence boosted my confidence and provided me with a sense of security. We can stand up for ourselves and feel safer now.”



Meet Tahmina

Like many girls in Bangladesh, Tahmina is optimistic about achieving her goals and building a strong future.

Safety for the youth

Tahmina lives in Dhaka with her four sisters and their mother. In many patriarchal South Asian communities, men are viewed as protectors of the family. In the absence of any male figure, families like Tahmina's are exposed to several forms of gender-based violence and societal pressures. The lack of safety affects the ability of young girls to attend school regularly and limits their access to essential resources and opportunities, critically impacting their potential for a better future.

Karate kids

Safety of young girls and children has always been our utmost priority! During our awareness session with parents, community based organisations and youth groups, we recognised that children were experiencing social bullying and sexual harassment. Taking on the suggestion from the communities, we organised self-defence classes for young girls to equip them with skills to protect themselves in such situations.

Beyond safety

However, the karate training not only helps with safety and safeguarding selves against harassment, but also instills confidence and self-esteem in young girls and teenagers, and ensures that young girls like Tahmina can feel safe to step out in their neighbourhood.

Additionally, it is a great tool for physical fitness, mental well-being and creates a sense of community or a peer support group within young girls and teenagers to look out for each other.



Tahmina practicing karate with her peers.

We Work With 7,494 Children in Nilphamari

Projects That Support Lasting Change

Safety First

Child marriage is alarmingly high in some communities in Bangladesh.

To reduce the social stigma around sexual education, and exposure to psychological and physical violence among adolescent girls in Nilphamari, we create inclusive empowerment programs to promote and spread such information. Through community-led initiatives, adolescents have participated in activities where they have improved their knowledge of menstrual hygiene and pregnancies.

Moreover, mothers and fathers have participated in home-based counselling sessions and increased their knowledge of gender-responsive care of their children, including sexual education and menstrual care. We collaborate with government health and family planning staff to create friendly and accessible health corners for teenagers.



Campaign against child marriage were supported to increase awareness among people.

263

parents support group formed at early learning centres



Male engagement in child development activities at home.

Equal responsibility

It takes a village to raise a child. However, fathers in many rural areas of Nilphamari do not know how to provide care in the early stages of childhood.

Additionally, the social norms dictate that mothers is the primary and often sole caregiver for the child. To challenge this norm in the local communities, we supported 3,073 fathers with gender-responsive early learning and nurturing care activities. Apart from financial support, fathers extend their role into childcare by providing emotional and physical support for their children like feeding, bathing and schooling.

With the help of technical knowledge around early learning, male caregivers are able to ensure that their children have a holistic development and well-being. Gender equality is still a distant reality in many countries around the world. Acknowledging and distributing caregiving responsibilities at home is only a first step.



Jakia wants to join the Bangladesh Civil Service.

**"My parents wanted me to get married early, but after attending group orientation meetings, they now support my dreams."
- Jakia (15)**

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Engaging in sports improve confidence and self-esteem in young girls

Together, we're working to create a more just world.

The region of Nilphamari is prone to climate disasters, so we are continually working to safeguard children by building climate resilience and safeguarding their future.

At nearly 20% primary school drop out rate, Nilphamari is above Bangladesh's national average, caused due to factors like poor quality of education, lack of motivation and professional support. We will support local schools to improve learning at foundational level with a reading camp, and improved curriculum design.

To make the school more inclusive, we will carry out accessibility assessments and revamp schools with renovation and designs to support children with disabilities.

Message from Plan Staff

"We brought changes in the mindset of more than 3,000 fathers of our sponsored children through different male engagement in child caring and rearing activities. Our special thanks to our sponsors for supporting us with the development journey for the betterment of these children."



Nova Shams,
Programme Unit
Manager

The Plan Effect

Sponsored children are at the centre of everything we do, and they help plan our programmes based on what's important to them. Sponsors' donations are a gateway into a community. This helps build trust and credibility to attract even more funds from new sources. This makes more sustainable programmes possible in sponsorship communities. This powerful synergy is something we call The Plan Effect.

Progress in Numbers

5,064

girls informed on
menstrual
hygiene

18,066

parents know
about improved
childcare

1,283

enrolled in Youth
Learning centres

2,906

youth sensitised
about gender-
based violence