

Church of the Nazarene Bangladesh
Child Development Center (CDC)
Report for Mr. David Argabright/South Asia Partnership
Reporting Period: October to December 2014

Present Situation:

Present situation of Bangladesh is unstable. Opposition parties are protesting in the street and demanding for government for reelection. Many people are losing their lives in the political violence here. We pray to God Almighty for a peaceful political situation. However, we are operating our activities in the CDCs as usual. Through our ministry, thousands of children are able to change their life. Non-Christians are learning about Jesus Christ and His Message. They are being transformed spiritually, economically and socially through our holistic child development.



Objectives:

- Provide quality education to needy children
- Provide nutritious food
- Make people aware on child and health-related diseases
- Teach the children to love their country and own community
- Strengthen Self Help Group (SHG) for parents' economical development
- Empower women
- Build healthy relationships with other community people
- Prepare children for a peaceful and just society

Working Areas:

Mr. David Argabright is helping a total of 8 CDCs in 7 districts. A minimum of 75 children attend each CDC. At least two caregivers and a cook are serving there under supervision of the Program Officer.

Name of CDC	District
Arifpur	Jessore
Kumarkhali	Khulna
Boleya	Dinajpur
Bachu Dighe	Dinajpur
Bishnowpur	Naogaon
Ramnogor (Sylhet)	Moulavibazar
Hatbas	Satkhira
Kalupara	Rajshahi
Total	7 Districts



Educational Activities:

Children wrote their annual examination between December 2nd and 15th and 99 percent of them passed. Government educational office supplied the questions to us. Afterwards, children started a new academic year. Caregivers took some new initiatives to teach the children. They taught new action songs, poems, did drawings and told moral stories. They also used leaves, colorful paper, flowers etc. to teach the children. Some children have said that they learn with pleasure when caregivers use creative methods. "I really like it when the caregiver teaches us with leaves or colorful papers," said Adash from Boleya CDC.

Some parents gave thanks for the coaching facilities. "I would try to save money for the coaching fee, it was a very hard task for me, but the CDC is giving it free. So I am grateful to you," politely said a mother Bobita from the same CDC. Our caregivers promote the study, not only of academic books, but also of literature, other newspapers and journals. Caregivers of the CDCs sit in a monthly meeting each month. They also sit with children's parents once in a month. Caregivers advised parents to follow up with children's work at home so that they read and do homework every day. Parents are happy to join in the parents meetings.



Children receive new toothbrushes and clean their teeth in Kumarkhali CDC.

Health and Nutritional Activities:

In Bangladesh the Infant Death Rate is 40.9 in 1,000 live births and the rate of underweight children is 36.8%. Chronic hunger is made worse by high rates of disease – particularly in children. Malnutrition has lifelong consequences – malnourished children are more likely to become ill more often and perform poorly in school. Therefore, we are working to overcome these challenges. The CDC children receive nutritional food from the CDC. Our caregivers also taught the children and their parents about a healthy life style. “I wouldn’t clean my hands by soap after using the latrine, but now I never forget it,” said Kiron, a CDC child. Children also clean their teeth daily. Health workers gave health awareness training to the pregnant mothers. They suggested to them to eat nutritional food. Teen children attended a class about adolescence. Our CDC caregivers conducted de-worming camps in the CDCs on October 19. Local government health office provided us with de-worming tablets. Health workers checked up children’s health and measured their height and weight. They said that children are growing physically. The CDC children regularly play in the CDC and that gives them a fresh mind.



Children wash their hands after using the latrine and before eating.



Receiving medicine in Bishnowpur CDC.

Social and Cultural Activities:

We live in a community. Children need to learn civic sense. We taught them to respect elderly persons. They learnt how to greet others. They also learnt what is right and what is wrong. We advised them to not to steal, quarrel and envy. We encouraged them to be patriotic. Our caregivers made visits in the village and talked with people. They counseled them to abandon smoking, alcohol, including all kinds of addiction. They also discussed the negative effects of child marriage, dowry and corruption.

We have healthy relationships with local leaders. We invited them when we arranged any program in the CDCs. The CDC children have observed some national and religious days. They observed World Teacher’s Day on October 5, Universal Child Day on November 20, and Victory Day and pre-Christmas on December 16. On Universal Child Day, children and caregivers joined in a rally with colorful banners and paper caps. In this program, children’s parents also were present. The theme of the program was to stop child abuse. Caregivers share about the importance of the day and responsibility of parents for their children. Children enjoyed Victory Day and pre-Christmas. Children cut a Christmas cake and decorated the CDCs with colorful paper.

Spiritual Activities:

Some 80 percent of children are non-Christians in the CDC, but they are interested to know about Jesus Christ. They have learned the Lord’s Prayer, thanksgiving prayer and others. Some children from other

faiths also join the Sunday prayer service and they also requested prayer. Children of the CDCs memorized verses from the Holy Bible. Caregivers conducted a Bible quiz and winners were awarded. Our caregivers used color books in the Sunday School. They told stories from the Holy Bible. "I like the story of the kind Samaritan. I want to be like him," said a child from Boleya CDC. Caregivers will conduct a Sunday School camp in April. The CDC staff attended a half-day prayer once in the last three months. Its aim is the spiritual development of the staff. Local Nazarene pastors spoke in the monthly prayer.



A child reads the Bible in Bishnowpur CDC.



Children dance in Bishnowpur CDC.

Self-Help Groups:

The aim of self-help groups (SHG) is to empower children's parents. We provided capacity building training to the members of the SHGs. Mithun Roy, 35, says: "I was jobless six months ago. I got training on income generation. I set up a small shop in the local market and every day I am earning at least BDT 200 (equal 2.50 USD)." He has also informed us that he used to take money from money lenders with high interest and suffered from this. He was involved with alcohol addiction and crime due to the disappointments of his jobless life. He happily said: "Now I am an accepted person in my community. I am dreaming to be a big businessman". Like Mithun Roy hundreds of unemployed people got a new life through SHGs and they are all thankful to us.



Impacts of the CDCs:

- Children's health has improved
- Non-Christians are learning about Jesus Christ and Christian values
- School drop-out rate is being reduced
- Incidents of child marriage and dowry are being decreased
- Healthy relationships between the Nazarene Church and people of other faiths are being built
- Local leadership and women's empowerment are being established

Conclusion:

Above all, we are serving to make a better society. We want every child to get his or her rights. We are sure that a better society will be established in Bangladesh through the CDC program. "We express our deep thanks to Mr. David Argabright and the South Asia Partnership for their help and support for our children," said a child's mother.



Success Story:

The turning point for Nirab

Six-year-old Nirab is a child of Ramnagor CDC. He attends Nursery class and is the only child of his parents. His mother is a housewife and his father is a driver. He lives with his parents in Ramnagor. They are indigenous people, so their culture, language, and clothes are different from mainstream Bangladeshi people. Nirab's father's income is insufficient to maintain his family expenses. But Nirab's mother knows how to sew and sometimes she sells dresses to the clothes shop and uses this money for the family.

A while ago, Nirab didn't know how to read and write. He wasn't interested in learning. After being enrolled in the Ramnagor CDC, he started to change. Now he can write the Bengali and English alphabets, do drawings, recitation etc. Earlier, he couldn't speak the Bengali language. But now he can speak it fluently, though it was a challenge for the caregiver. They spent extra time with him.

"Nirab is a very good student. Every Sunday he comes to Sunday School and learns how to pray. He will be a good person," said his caregiver. Nirab attends the CDC regularly. He has changed his behavior too. Earlier, he used to use bad language, but now he doesn't. His parents are very happy about their son's positive progress. His mother said that they wouldn't have been able to educate their child if the CDC hadn't been established in their village. His mother thinks that the CDC is the turning point for her son's life.

Nirab receives books, exercise books, school uniform, a bag and regular lunch from the CDC. He had been suffering from long-term malnutrition. He was weak and thin, but after getting nutritional food at the CDC, his weight and height has increased. He feels better and enjoys himself in the centre. He has lots of good friends and plays with them. His dream is to be a good teacher in the future. Nirab's parents gave special thanks to the Church of the Nazarene International and David Argabright for their kind support and love.

