

CHILDREN HELPING VULNERABLE CHILDREN GRADUALLY COME OUT OF POVERTY

Children engaging and supporting their peers, including reaching the most vulnerable

Asia and the Pacific: Bangladesh

Aid Organization, an adolescent led network has been engaging with children in the streets, children with disabilities, children in conflict with the law, children on the move, and children in institutions, to help them and their families gradually overcome poverty and access educational and skills development programs.

‘When poverty engulfs a family, the children are the most affected and most vulnerable- their rights to survival, growth and development are at risk. A child born today in the developing countries has a 4 out of 10 chance of living in extreme poverty; this chance is even higher for Bangladesh child. Poverty circumscribes every aspect of the child’s existence starting from malnutrition, lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation, to life expectancy’, states a leading adolescent of Aid Organization in Bangladesh. ‘Children under 17 years of age comprise 45 per cent of Bangladesh’s population of 160 million and among them 16 per cent are less than 5 years of age. About 0.8 million children work in the formal sector forming 10.5 per cent of the total child labour force. These Children have no rights, no freedom, and no ability to defend themselves and are normally abused if they refuse to work.’

To address this, the adolescent led network decided to collaborate with government in addressing these children’s needs and help get them gradually out of poverty. Through a survey, they located several cases of child labour and slavery in slum areas. Their interventions are twofold: they work directly with children, educating and empowering them, and they activate a micro-credit program for their parents: ‘100 parents are involved in our microcredit program, so we can track out what actually have been going on for the children and we always inspire parents for their children’s higher education and skills they have acquired from our organization. The children are still attached to our monitoring program’. Through these interventions, children in vulnerable settings have accessed non-formal education, and skills development training. Some have enrolled in higher education, and helped reduced risky activities of children in slum areas. Through their interventions, the organization also attempts to reduce child labour, child marriage, and sexual exploitation of girls.

Aid Organization

