

PASSION SUCCEEDED POVERTY CONCEDED

The smiles on the faces of 10 slum children are after the successful results in the Primary education this year. This has come after long fight against poverty, children passion and personal dedication, parents' encouragement and engagement, family and community support and the services of the Government Primary School teachers. SOHAY provides guidance to the children and their parents, maintained close contacts to the community and school. On top SOHAY consistently planted the aspirations of bright future through education in the children mind. Together did not allow poverty stand in the path.



Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. The enrolment to the school is very encouraging but the completion rate is quite poor. We have observed lot of children dropped their education due to the system, poverty, parents' interest, family and community environment.

Education is not easy, there is no short cut route, cannot inject it to the children brain. It has to follow the conventional path e.g. to attend school regularly, complete homework, regular study, and give dedicated time. The major stumbling blocks for the children growing in poor economic conditions are illiterate, non-motivated and short sighted parents, households, social and community environments and norms and the poor economic conditions. So, SOHAY's education programme has strong focus in these areas.

The success in education is long range it comes after years after year's continuous engagement. Withstanding such long for children living in poverties is not easy. They are precious resources to their families. Lot of children at school age are one of the main earning members of similar economic groups. SOHAY stands by the side of these families to ensure these children do not fall in the crack.

To achieve the millennium development goal, achieve universal primary education, we have to ensure retention of these children at school. And to ensure that we have to provide support in two ends at the school and at the households. Our focus as of today was concentrated to the school ends to make it work effectively, to provide better education support to the children. This is fully justified.

Unfortunately, the attention to the children household and community are very limited and not focused. The current household and community environment are fully dysfunctional for education, destruct children attention to other areas than to the education. This substantially reduces the expected benefit. We need to fix lot of things to make it congenial and education friendly. SOHAY works with the



children, families, and communities to make the system functional. It therefore strongly argues that time has come to give more attention to these areas if we would like to see the dramatic improvements of our statistics.

I am pleased to update you that in 2010 SOHAY is working in 15 slums in Dhaka Urban areas, 550 HHs and 800 children. All children are studying in the Government Primary Schools.

In addition to the education programme, SOHAY also provides skills development training to the children dropped from school and engaged in hazardous jobs for their livelihood. The purpose of the skills training is to shift these children to the non-hazardous job environment.

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