

Church of the Nazarene Bangladesh  
Child Development Center (CDC)  
Report for Mr. David Argabright/South Asia Partnership  
*Reporting Period: January to March 2015*

**Labu loves Jesus Christ**

"I love Jesus Christ because he came to the earth for us and sacrificed his life on the cross" said Labu, a child of another faith from Bachu Dighe CDC in Dinajpur. His parents never even wanted to meet with Christians before the CDC was established in this area. His father, who is a day laborer, had the wrong idea that Christians are foreigners and white skinned, that they are enemies of his religion. He changed his perception about Christians when his child Labu enrolled in the Bachu Dighe CDC.

"The behavior of Christians is very good, they respect other people's faith, my child is improving his academic skills and other skills" said Labu's father. He is 30 years old and said that he never thought his child would go to any school. "I never went to school and gradually I am becoming a loser in my life. I lost my ancestral land due to my illiteracy" he sadly said. He told that some land grabber occupied his land and now he lives on government land in a hut that is made of bamboo and a tin roof.

Labu shyly said that he was taught many things at the CDC. "I can write and read properly, I want to be a teacher in the future" he said. His father said that when he heard his child read he became very happy. "I cannot read and write but my son can do it, he will be educated and will change my miserable situation" said Labu's father. When he was talking he was emotional and wept.

Labu likes go to school daily. He gets nutritious food, health lessons beside academic study. He has been participating in the CDC program since 2012. His father couldn't take him to a doctor when he became sick, but now he gets medicine from the CDC if he becomes sick. He likes to play with his classmates in the CDC's playground. He is eager about cultural activities. He learnt songs at the CDC.

He joins Sunday school each Sunday where he learns about Jesus Christ. He loves to hear stories from the Holy Bible. He has memorized the Ten Commandments. Each week he says at least one verse from the Bible. His mother said that her son's behavior is better than before he joined the CDC. "I think the CDC caregivers are teaching my son aptly and he is performing well. I am grateful to the CDC authority" his mother said.

His mother is member of a Self Help Group. She took a small loan and invested it in house farming. Now she is producing vegetables such as greens, green chili, brinjal etc.

Labu's parents now don't have any objection or any misunderstanding about Christians at all through seeing the activities of the CDC program!



### Weak learner Chabikun is performing well

Five-year-old Chabikun didn't want to come to the CDC. She was scared of the caregivers. She couldn't do her home work. Being tribal she couldn't talk Bengali properly.

The caregivers of Ramnagor CDC thought Chabikun was sick. One day a caregiver visited her house and came to know the real story.

Chabikun was born at Ramnagor village in Moulavibazar district. Ramnagor is a village beside a tea estate area; most of the people are tea workers. Chabikun's parents also earn their income from the tea garden as day laborers. They are both illiterate and their daily income is very small. Being illiterate they cannot help Chabikun in her studies; they also don't have the ability to keep a tutor.

The caregiver realized the reality of Chabikun and started to take special care with her. By this care of the caregiver Chabikun learnt the Bangla and English alphabets. The caregiver regularly followed up on her study, sometimes praised her for her homework, and gradually Chabikun started showing eagerness in her studies. Now she comes to the CDC regularly. Last annual examination, she stood third in her class.

Although Chabikun is from another faith, she likes to join Sunday school class. At the CDC she receives books, exercise books, pens, medicine and a mid-day meal. Her mother said that her daughter's weight has increased. One of her neighbors admired her daughter: "Chabikun is a very good girl in our community. She is gaining very good lessons from the CDC, she has curiosity to study. She sits for study willingly. She is an example for other girls."

Chabikun told her caregiver about her future aim for life: "I want to be a nurse and will serve sick people" said Chabikun.



### Present Situation:

Being a developing country, Bangladesh has many challenges like political unrest, poverty, unemployment, malnourishment etc. In the last three months, politically the country was unstable. Especially during January, the first anniversary of the general election, the country's political situation became worst. Demands were not met and countrywide protests and traffic blockades were initiated. After many violent and fatal attacks on the public, a total of 75 victims had died as of 20 February 2015. However, from end of March, political violence was comparatively improving. We operated our CDC program carefully. We praise the Lord that we were safe and secure during unrest time. Mr. David and the South Asia Partnership have been supporting a total of 596 children (526 sponsored and 70 non-sponsored) in 8 CDCs.

### Objectives:

- To provide coaching and counseling to the children and ensure their education
- To upgrade the nutrition status among the children and families
- To utilize local resources
- To improve awareness about social issues like addiction, early marriage & dowry
- To enhance general knowledge
- To enhance spiritual knowledge through Sunday school, Sunday worship
- To give children a civic sense
- To initiate income generating programs with guardians

### Working areas:

Mr. David Argabright & the South Asia Partnership are supporting a total of 8 CDCs in 7 districts in Bangladesh. At least 75 children participate in each CDC.

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

### Educational Aspects:

Children started the new academic year with pleasure. They received new books from the CDCs in the first week of January. Our CDC caregivers communicated with the local educational department and they received text books from the government office for children. Now children are preparing for 1<sup>st</sup> term examination that will be held in May. Some parents said that gradually their children are becoming more interested in study, "In the past my son wouldn't go to school, but by sincere care of the CDC caregivers; he willingly goes to school, he attends the CDC for coaching and his mid-day meal" said Rasada from Bachu Dighe CDC. Some new children have learnt alphabets, poems. Caregivers also practiced handwriting with them. They visited children's houses and advised their parents about their child's education. Each month parents and caregivers sat in a meeting where they discussed and exchanged their views. Caregivers made a list of those who are weak learners. They have been giving them special care.



Children receive exercise books in Ramnogor CDC



Ramnogor children are proud about their new books!

### Physical Aspects:

To be able to concentrate in study, children need sound health. Through the mid-day meal we are meeting their physical needs. They ate food four days a week in the CDC. We also taught them cleanliness. Before eating, they washed hands in the CDC; they also practice this at their home. Each child also brushed their teeth after eating in the CDC. A health worker who is also a village doctor checked our children's health in the North district. "I noticed children's height and weight are increasing. Now they are more emphatic" mentioned our health worker. We fed children de-worming tablets on January 25. Many parents didn't know the importance of de-worming tablets for

their children. We made them aware and now they willingly give these to their children on time. In the village area, people never used to wash their hands by soap, we told them to use soap and many people practice this at their home. We also gave some seasonal fruits in the CDCs.



Children eat their mid-day meal in Bishnowpur CDC



Bishnowpur children wash hands before they eat

### Social and Cultural Aspects:

Children of the CDC took part in social and cultural activities in the last three months. They attended International Mother Language Day on February 21, Birthday of Nation of Father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 17 and Independence Day on March 26. In these days, children learned the history of the country from the CDC caregivers. Children earnestly paid homage by flowers to the language martyrs on the International Mother Language Day on February 21. Children attended a sports competition on Independence Day. Winner players got prizes in the competition. The CDC caregivers taught dances and songs to the children. Each Wednesday they arrange a cultural program and perform dances, poems and songs etc. Some children perform at their village what they learnt from the CDC. The CDC is also a recreation center. They can play football, cricket and local games. In Ramnagor CDC the children and caregivers participated in an annual picnic on February 23. On that day, they enjoyed a cultural program and the whole day they played, including caregivers who also played with them. They all jointly cooked. "It was very joyful moments for children and caregivers. It gave us great entertainment" said a caregiver.



Children observe Mother Language Day in Bachu Dighe



Ramnagor children enjoy playing outside

## Spiritual Aspects:

We not only give education, nutrition but also spiritual support to the CDC children. We started class with prayer. They give thanks to God. "We thank Almighty for last night and we pray to Him so that we can study aptly. We also pray for sponsor's health" said Monirul, a child from Kalupara CDC.

Although most of the CDC children are from another religion, they participate in Sunday school spontaneously. Our caregivers taught them hymns, verses of the Bible, Ten Commandments, stories of the Bible etc. Shrbon, a child of Boleya CDC says, "I heard the story of the kind Samaritan who helped a helpless person. Jesus taught us by this story that we all should help those who are helpless and needy." Another child from Arifpur CDC said that he learnt about forgiveness and love, "If we forgive and love each other we could make a better society, I heard that from the Sunday school" he said. CDC caregivers have planned to conduct a Sunday school camp in June.



Children pray in Bachu Dighe ...



... and Bishnowpur CDC.



Singing a song in Ramnogor CDC

## Self Help Group:

Money makes money. Through the Self Help Group (SHG) we are promoting self employment among the children's parents. Sometimes we conduct trainings for members of the Self Help Group (SHG). Many child's mothers are doing small business like grocery shop, goat and cow rearing etc. Rupali, a child's mother, rears a milk cow and earns money. "I thank the CDC caregivers and organizer because they encouraged me to rear milk cow and now I sell milk and earn money" said Rupali; her child reads in the Bishnowpur CDC. Like Rupali, many children's mothers are making money by help of SHGs.

## Outcomes of the CDCs:

- Children are doing well in the class
- Parents are willingly sending their children to school
- Non-Christians learn about Jesus Christ
- Children are improving their health
- Cultural development is boosted
- Children are more interested to join Sunday school
- Parents become self reliant
- Women are being empowered
- Non-Christians are receiving Christ as Savior
- Children can improve their hidden talents
- Children are growing more punctual and disciplined



### Prayer Requests:

- ✓ Pray for CDC children's first term exam
- ✓ Pray for children's parents
- ✓ Pray for country's political situation



### Conclusion:

Above all, we are earnestly working for underprivileged children and their parents. We want to preach the Word of God through our activities. We sincerely thank Mr. David Argabright and the South Asia Partnership for their kind help (above pictures show children praying for David's bicycle ride). We pray to Almighty for his health so that he can be used more to extend God's kingdom.

